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JUVENILE EXCURSIONS

IN

Literature and Criticism.

JUVENILE EXCURSIONS

IN

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM.

CONSISTING OF

I.

BRIEF OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, MANNERS, OPINIONS, AND BOOKS, WITH ANECDOTES AND EXTRACTS.

II.

CRITICAL REMARKS ON POETRY ANTIENT, AND MODERN.

III.

SHORT DESCRIPTIONS OF SOME PICTURESQUE SCENES ON THE NORTHERN LAKES.

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Rector of BILLINGFORD, in NORFOLK.

——— *Et mens, sine pondere, ludit.*

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PREFACE.

THE Reader (if Reader there ſhould happen to be) of this very miſcellaneous production will, poſſibly, wonder it ſhould be the Author's choice to preſent his work to the world in ſuch unconnected fragments, rather than in a more regular, and finiſhed form. The truth is,—moſt of theſe detached materials, and, more particularly, the criticiſms in the ſecond part, were part of a projected work of a much more elaborate texture. But the Author, mean-while, embracing a profeſſion that neceſſarily engroſſed his whole time and attention, found himſelf unable to proceed in his plan. Viewing, however, his ſcattered materials ſometimes with a paternal eye, he imagined he could diſcover in many of them ſomething that deſerved a better fate than that of collecting duſt at the end of a ſhelf: and, by degrees, aſſumed courage enough to ſubmit them to the public eye. If diſhonourable to him as an *Author*, at leaſt, he hopes they will not diſgrace him as a *Man*.

The

The journal compriſed in the third part was, by no means, intended to rival ſeveral elaborate works of this kind, lately publiſhed. It's only merit, beſides its brevity, conſiſts, perhaps, in its having been, entirely, noted down on the very ſpots it deſcribes. From the Author's reſidence of eleven months in that country, he was enabled to watch for ſerenity of weather, and many other accidental advantages, which, to a paſſing traveller, can ſeldom occur.

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JUVENILE EXCURSIONS

IN

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM.

PART I.

ON DIDACTIC CRITICISM.

WHAT volumes of didactic criticism are daily pouring from the press to develop the principles of taste, and good writing; upon all parts of which a man of genuine talents fixes his eye, intuitively, in an instant! Yet, to

whom but men of genius, can ſuch productions be ſuppoſed to appertain? —To teach us to write well, without talent, will be rather difficult: and to inſtruct us to judge well, without natural taſte, will prove no very eaſy, or very uſeful undertaking.

ON VANITY.

PRIDE, or, at leaſt, that lower ſpecies of it which borders upon vanity, is ſeldom the companion of good ſenſe, and real merit; though it may, ſometimes, accompany parts of a more ſuperficial, and ſhewy kind. This is ſo true, that I have often obſerved men, who were truly proud in other reſpects, uniformly modeſt and humble,

humble, in thoſe wherein they really excelled.

ON UNLIMITED COMPLAISANCE.

A Man of *unlimited* complaiſance and good breeding is, ſometimes, very divertingly puzzled in a company where contradiction in any degree happens to prevail. Before he can teſtify his aſſent to one propoſition, another diametrically oppoſite is ſtarted by one whom, perhaps, he is equally careful not to offend.—He heſitates—ſtares unmeaningly about him—at laſt, is reduced to the ridiculous neceſſity of replying to neither, except by means of a nod, or a ſmile.

ON THE EFFECTS OF A BAD CONSCIENCE ON OUTWARD BEHAVIOUR.

UNHAPPINESS, or, rather, an exterior appearance of it, is, by no means, always the effect of wickedneſs. How many have I known who, inſtead of giving way to ſorrow and penitence for crimes which drew after them a long train of calamities, immediately commenced *merry fellows!* From being moderately chearful and lively, they became, ſuddenly, the buffoons of every company. But who, even amongſt thoſe who laughed with them, did not plainly ſee the reaſon of this?—They became merry fellows, when they could no longer be happy

happy ones. Mirth and immoderate laughter are the offspring of thoughtleſs levity; and, therefore, the only refuge for thoſe who wiſh to eſcape the admonitions of their own hearts. But alas!—it is eaſy for any attentive obſerver to diſcern, during the intervals of theſe flaſhes of merriment, that deep gloom of ſelf-condemnation which it is their chief purpoſe to avoid.

ON LITERARY ENVY.

WHEN the merit of any man excites envy in another, who is, at the ſame time, conſcious that he cannot, with any appearance of juſtice, altogether decry it, he uſually contrives to ſelect ſome one of the more trifling

accompliſhments his rival poſſeſſes, (perhaps the very meaneſt of all) and this he liberally extols:—Thus endeavouring to obſcure the luſtre of his higher excellencies by throwing them into a comparative ſhade, and by turning the public attention on the more inſignificant part of his character.—It was not, probably, without a touch of this malignant ſpirit that Milton denied his cotemporary Dryden to be a poet, though he allowed and praiſed his talent of verſification. It was more palpably ſo, and with a much ſtronger daſh of the ludicrous, that the rapacious Curl, on a well known occaſion, confeſſed that "Pope had a knack of making verſes:—but for proſe," added he, "I think myſelf a match for him."

ON SOME PECULIAR PROPERTIES OF MUSIC.

IT has ever appeared to me that people, in general, are much miſtaken with regard to the peculiar excellencies, and properties of muſic. When we wiſh to hear it, we ſhut ourſelves up in a cloſe room, both ſummer and winter, and thus ſeparate it from every object in nature that has any connexion with, or analogy to it. It may appear fantaſtic affectation, but, for myſelf, I never am, I confeſs, ſo little delighted with muſic, as when, fettered by the elbows of a ſurrounding croud, who ſhew ſcarce any reliſh for its charms, and perhaps drown all its finer tones in noiſe, and clamour. Nor does it ever charm ſo much as

when, free as air, and healthy by exerciſe, I can make a thouſand fine objects, and romantic ſcenes accord to its ſweet touches. Such is the analogy, in this reſpect, between art and nature, or ſuch, at leaſt, does it ſeem to the fanciful mind, that the rude magnificence of the ocean, and the tumult of its heaving waves; the ſplendor of the rolling ſummer clouds; the verdant ſteep ſpotted with flocks, and even the ſolitary waſte;—all call forth correſponding emotions, and ſeverally create a ſucceſſion of muſical ideas.—To perſons of this romantic caſt the long exploded ſerenade, ſo ſeldom practicable in this climate, muſt afford high gratification. Beſides the delicious idea of communicating ſympathetic pleaſure to a beloved object,

and

and the ſpirituality, and refinement of the cuſtom itſelf, moſt exquiſitely do

—— "Soft ſtillneſs and the night
Become the touches of ſweet harmony."

ON SOME PASSAGES IN THE "PENSEROSO" OF MILTON.

THE attention of a true poet to the minuteſt phænomena of nature is wonderful. "Silence *hiſt* along:"—How peculiar a trait in the Penſeroſo of Milton!—In the deep ſilence of the night, every one muſt have obſerved a kind of hiſſing noiſe, which encreaſes in proportion to the ſtillneſs around, and the attention of the obſerver. It may ariſe from the circulation

lation of the blood, or, perhaps, merely from the motion of the air in the long labyrinth of the ear.

The "winds *piping* loud," in the ſame poem, I have heard cenſured as vulgar, and unpoetic. It is, however, highly imitative, and natural; and in part countenanced by the "πνοιη λιγυρα" which ſo often occurs in the Iliad.

Again:—Milton ſays of the moon;

"And oft, as if her head ſhe bow'd,
Stooping thro' a fleecy cloud."

Where the image of the ſudden refraction of the moon's rays, on the edge of a cloud, is exceedingly curious, and unuſual in poetry.

After-

Afterwards, in the ſame poem:

"While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er th' accuſtomed oak."

This is a complete picture by moon light. We behold her pale light tipping yon lofty oak with its natural verdure, while all below is undiſtinguiſhed blackneſs. She could not have ſtopped her dragons any where elſe with half the effect; unleſs perhaps, on the edge of ſome ruined abbey.

The perſonification of contemplation, in this poem, is a very remarkable paſſage. By an uncommonly daring ſtretch of imagination, Milton has repreſented this faculty as one of the cherubic attendants on the throne

of

of the Deity. This throne is deſcribed by Ezekiel, and, after him, by Milton, in his Paradiſe Loſt, with "wheels of beryl, and careering fires between." The prophet, farther, ſays of the four cherubims, "and the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flaſh of fire." This may have, primarily, ſuggeſted to the poet this perſonification of a faculty whoſe excurſions are ſo rapid, and boundleſs.

ON A PASSAGE IN GIBBON'S HISTORY.

THERE is no part of Gibbon's famous work on the decline of the Roman State, where the pertinacious ſceptic (though ſeldom hid long together,)

gether,) ſtands more fully confeſt, than in his account of Julian's vain attempt to rebuild the temple of Jeruſalem. He, fairly enough, adduces the evidence of this remarkable fact. He gives us the teſtimony of Ambroſe, of Chryſoſtom, and of Gregory Nazienzen: the laſt of whom wrote his account of the miracle before the cloſe of the year in which it happened. This ſo very recent evidence might ſeem enough to ſatisfy any unbiaſſed reader, even without the teſtimony of Marcellinus, *a ſoldier, a pagan hiſtorian*, and the friend of the apoſtate himſelf. Where ſhall we find nearer evidence of any fact, of which the eye witneſſes are dead? It indeed ſeems almoſt to ſatisfy Mr. Gibbon himſelf:—

himſelf:—"ſuch authority," ſays he, "ſhould *ſatisfy* a believing, and muſt *aſtoniſh* an incredulous mind." But there being a miracle in the caſe, and one, by its nature, intimately connected with thoſe of the chriſtian religion, the philoſopher, happily, ſteps in to his reſcue. "Yet a philoſopher," he continues, "may ſtill require the *original evidence* of *impartial*, and *intelligent* ſpectators." Now, of the multitude of ſpectators, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe many, if not intelligent, at leaſt impartial. But how was the evidence of theſe impartial men to be conveyed to poſterity?—It is not likely there were many of the ſtanders-by qualified *themſelves* to inſtruction poſterity, by a full, and exact

exact *narration* of the whole affair. Nor, if they had, would the philoſopher, it is probable, have allowed Mr. Gibbon to believe any thing ſo much to the prejudice of his hero, Julian. At the ſame time, it muſt be allowed more than probable this evidence was repeatedly given, in a verbal manner, by eye-witneſſes to thoſe who *were* qualified for ſuch an undertaking. It is, likewiſe, pretty certain ſuch evidence was never contradicted by any cotemporary. And what, more than this, can be ſaid to eſtabliſh the truth of any hiſtorical fact whatever?—But it is not eaſy to calculate the preciſe degree of evidence that will ſatisfy Mr. Gibbon, in any caſe. By his above-mentioned

expreſ-

expreſſion of "original evidence of impartial, and intelligent ſpectators," it might be conjectured that ſomething reſembling our preſent form of depoſition upon oath before a magiſtrate, in caſe of any very remarkable event, could, alone, have acted as an opiate upon his reſtleſs incredulity. If ſo, what pity 'twas denied him! For my own part, had the ſame teſtimony been adduced to prove that Julian had, by the aſſiſtance of his Pagan Deities, in an inſtant raiſed a ſtructure ſuperior to Solomon's, on the ſpot were his attempts were miraculouſly impeded, I could not, without difficulty, have with-held my aſſent.

ON THE APPEARANCE OF THE PLANETS.

I Have often thought it probable, on viewing the planets in their various appearances thro' a good teleſcope, and reflecting on the immenſe power, and wiſdom of their divine architect, that notwithſtanding their very different diſtances from the ſun, they may all enjoy *nearly* the ſame degree of light, and heat, from that luminary. This is contrary to the common hypotheſis; but, at the ſame time, ſeems more rational, and conformable to the uſual operations of nature, than to ſuppoſe, as Huyghens and ſome others do, that the inhabitants of each planet are formed ſo as to beſt ſuit the various degrees of

heat conſequent to their ſtation in the ſyſtem. It is, ſurely, a more ſublime, as well as ſimple hypotheſis, to conſider animated nature as more uniform, and the inanimate as more variouſly modified. On viewing Mercury, we cannot, even with the beſt glaſſes, diſcern the leaſt variation of ſplendour on his ſurface, or any thing like ſpots upon his diſk. This ſeems to indicate a perpetual ſucceſſion of clouds, and vapours; or, at leaſt, a prodigious denſity of atmoſphere:—the former of which we know to be the uſual effect of violent heat in the planet we inhabit. On the other hand, Saturn, ſo immenſely diſtant, is encompaſſed by a broad, flat, and lucid ring, which reflects the ſolar light rather more ſtrongly than the body

body of the planet. Now, what more probable uſe can be aſſigned for this ring than that of ſerving to encreaſe both the light, and heat of the ſun, in thoſe remote regions of ſpace; and that, in ſuch a degree, as, *entirely*, to compenſate for the diſtance of that planet, by ſupplying it with a multitude of intercepted, and reflected rays.

ON THE EFFECT OF MUSIC ON THE MIND.

THE effect of muſic on ſavage, and uncultivated minds is ſaid to be excellent; and I entirely believe it, even without the teſtimony of Lycurgus, Polybius, Quintilian, and an hundred

other venerable names that are uſually dragged in to ſupport this doctrine. Whether, in the preſent times, and in its preſent ſtate, the effects of muſic are equally ſalutary, will admit of a doubt. It may be alledged by opponents, and with much plauſibility, that on minds of a harſher and leſs ſuſceptible texture, muſic, which, if it had any, could not fail of a good effect, uſually takes little, or no effect, at all. That it acts only on thoſe minds, by nature, too delicate and ſenſible; and heightens theſe propenſities to a very dangerous degree.—However this be with regard to hearers only of muſic, it is certain that the exertions of fancy requiſite in the compoſing it (no very uncommon purſuit at preſent,) are highly detri-

mental

mental to ſerious and uſeful ſtudy. It is an old obſervation that a mind dazzled, and at the ſame time enervated by the harlot allurements of imagination, becomes incapable of reliſhing the charms of ſimple and unadorned truth. But, in addition to this, there is a ſpecies of hurry and diſſipation of thought, often produced by the habits of compoſition, which is, if poſſible, ſtill more hurtful.—The remark will hold good, to a certain degree, in poetry, as well as its ſiſter art;—eſpecially that kind of it which depends on the imaginative powers:—no doubt the moſt excellent of all. A man may read, or compoſe an argumentative poem, or follow all the intricacies of a fugue, without the leaſt hazard to his underſtanding.

But are theſe *real* poetry, or muſic? —Are they not, rather, abuſes of them?—When we have to do with true poetry, and genuine muſic, "the willing ſoul" is too apt "to forget all duties and all cares."

ON FANATICISM.

THE editor, or, as may fairly enough be preſumed, *author*, of a pleaſing collection of letters *, has, with much ſpirit and pleaſantry, ſhewn the influence of fanatic ſuperſtition on vulgar minds. "It is obſervable," ſays he, "that God is never ſo much blaſphemed as when men are moſt

* Between St. Evremond and Waller.

moſt *religious**. It is then they ſo liberally inveſt him with their peculiar follies, paſſions, and prejudices. The Creator of the univerſe muſt be of a party, a ſect, a faction. He muſt be particularly *their*, or he is *no* God. His attributes, and qualities muſt be ſuch as are moſt likely to ſerve their preſent purpoſes. If their way be through heaps of ſlain, he muſt go before them; and he who has declared that his delight is in mercy, rather than in ſacrifice, is not allowed to be ſerved, or gratified his own way. The Scot's fanatics, after the loſs of a

* May we not, with more propriety, here ſubſtitute the word *ſuperſtitious*? *Religious*, as an Engliſh word, was, perhaps, never uſed to imply an exceſs of religion, whatever *religioſus*, its parent word, may in Latin.

battle gave him a very warm reception. They remonſtrated, with *great ſpirit*, againſt his conduct towards the *ſaints*; and intimated, that, whatever right he might have to their allegiance, as the Lord, he was but a poor politician, and had very little idea of his own intereſt. "For our parts, (ſaid they,) it is but a ſmall thing to loſe our lands, and inheritance; but for the Lord's flock to be leſſened, his glory ſet at nought, and his people trodden under foot;—this ſhews a *ſtrange negligence ſomewhere* †". Thus, in all ages, have enthuſiaſtic and narrow

† The author of this collection of letters has, through an odd accident co-operating with his well known enthuſiaſm for the memory of departed genius, furniſhed the laughers with a very

row minds levelled the Deity to their own paltry cuſtoms, and ideas. Thus did the Romans, in the earlier period of their ſtate, remonſtrate with their deities,

---

very ridiculous anecdote. I heard the ſtory from an inhabitant of the place where it happened, but believe it is not generally known.—Hearing that Collins the poet was buried at Chicheſter, he travelled thither on purpoſe to enjoy all the luxury of poetic ſorrow, by weeping over his grave. On enquiry, he found that Mr. Collins was interred in a ſort of garden ſurrounded by the cloiſter of the cathedral, which is called the paradiſe. He was let into this place by the ſexton; and, after about an hour's ſecluſion, came forth in all the ſolemn dignity of woe. On ſupping with a friend in the evening, and deſcribing to him the ſpot ſacred to his ſorrows, he was told;—That he had, by no means, miſapplied his tears:—he had been lamenting a very honeſt man, and uſeful member of ſociety;—Mr. Collins, *the taylor*.

deities, on any failure of their enterprises; and thus do the lower Neapolitans, ſtill, frequently miſuſe their unfortunate patron St. Januarius, when unpropitious to them.—But a more ludicrous inſtance of this cannot be adduced than the generally-received opinion of the Ruſſian commonalty:—That their great patron, St. Nicholas being of a retired, unambitious temper, had, on a former vacancy, refuſed to be *God*; but after the reign of God the Father ſhall be at an end, ſtill deſigns, "however loth," to aſſume that dignity.

ON REASONING IN RHYME.

WHEN Dr. Johnſon commends Dryden for his talent of reaſoning in verſe, he, in my opinion, praiſes him for an excellence totally miſapplied, and out of nature. A poet reaſoning in rhyme ſtrikes me in, nearly, the ſame ridiculous light as an actor delivering a meſſage, or reading a petition, in recitative. We deſervedly condemn proſe which affects the attributes, and lofty flights of poetry; and why ſhould we not equally ſtigmatiſe poetry that aſſumes the cold, and preciſe airs of her humbler relative proſe? We, humouroufly, call the former *proſe run mad*; and I do not

not ſee why the latter ſhould not be as ſuitably entitled *poetry in her dotage.* Neither, can the chief purpoſes of reaſoning be, I think, properly anſwered in verſe. The neceſſity of continual rhymes muſt take ſomewhat from the perſpicuity, and preciſion requiſite to argument. Where the reaſoning is ſo cloſe as to ſeem obſcure to common readers, and explanation is admitted into the texture of the poem, which is often the caſe, the whole is degraded below proſe itſelf. Where illuſtration only is required, the poet re-aſſumes his dignity.—In confirmation of this truth, let me give the reader a remarkable inſtance of each mode of writing. Both, it muſt be confeſſed, bad, in them-

themſelves; but, certainly, rendered much worſe by their tranſpoſed properties.

" Enchanting inhabitants of theſe " lovely regions, who delight, by " your concerts, heavenly minds, and " ſoften the troubles of this tranſient " life, alas! your ſongs, your joys " will ſoon be at end. Already the " mercileſs *Bird catcher* advances " haſtily, and ſurveys, with furtive " eye, that *thorney buſh*, thoſe hoſpi- " table branches that, by the thick- " neſs of their foliage, ſeemed to offer " you an impenetrable ſhelter. In- " ſenſible to your cries, already he " ſteals his fingers into your neſt, and " raviſhing, with a murdering hand, " your growing family, thoſe young

" ones,

" ones, feeble, and trembling, ſcarce-
" ly covered with a thin down, car-
" ries away, notwithſtanding your
" plaintive cries, the fruit of your
" tender loves*."

Here, the familiar imagery offers a moſt laughable contraſt to the ſtately-ſtalking diction.—A contrary, and almoſt equally ridiculous effect is produced by the following lines of Dryden.

Then, to be born, is to begin to be
Some *other* thing we were not formerly:
And what we call to die, is not *t'appear*,
Or be the thing that, formerly, we were.
Thoſe very elements which we *partake*
Alive, *when dead*, ſome other bodies make;

Tranſlated

* Tranſlation of the Abbé de Reyrac's Hymn to the Sun.

Tranſlated grow, have ſenſe, or can diſcourſe;
But *Death, on deathleſs ſubſtance, has no force.*

That forms are changed, I grant; that nothing can
Continue in the figure it began.
The golden age to ſilver was debas'd;
To copper that; our metal came at laſt.

ON MENTAL INEQUALITY.

SOME late authors of eminence have much derided the notion of mental inequality. They contend that a poet, provided he be not idle, or exhauſted, can write as well at one time, as at another. But do theſe authors allow imagination to be, in any degree, eſſential to poetic excellence?—If they do not, no more need be

be ſaid on the ſubject.—If they do, let them conſider a little the fickle, and very delicate nature of this faculty; which is, probably, the more ſo in proportion to the degree of perfection in which it is enjoyed. Let them likewiſe reflect, how much imagination, and probably memory alſo, depend on bodily conſtitution; which, as we well know, is perpetually varying, even in the moſt robuſt frames. A gloomy, ungenial day will ſometimes contract theſe finer faculties, as a flower folds itſelf up during the night. Allowing the other powers of the underſtanding to remain always in the ſame ſtate, it will, doubtleſs, be always eaſy to make verſes. But will theſe verſes have that vigour, animamation, and flavour of the ſoil that is requiſite

requiſite to preſerve them pure, and poignant to the remoteſt ages.—The notion of poetic inſpiration we, willingly, give up as one of the golden dreams of antiquity. But the very exiſtence of ſuch a notion, and the confeſſions of almoſt every poet ancient and modern, as well as the internal evidence of it in their works, clearly evince that a poet who is ſometimes able to write excellently, is not always able to write even well.

ON THE CONTEMPLATION OF ANTIQUITIES.

THE contemplation of antiquity, and the magnificent remains of ancient ſtructures has a moſt pleaſing,

and uſeful effect on ſuſceptible minds. —The ſimpleſt, and moſt obvious emotion, uſually, ariſes from the beautiful, and pictureſque appearance theſe dilapidated edifices make, ſituated, as they generally are, in the moſt fertile ſpots.—They call up before the eyes of the penſive beholder the long train of heroes and ſages, in all their antiquated pageantry, that, once, inhabited them.—The connection theſe relics have with hiſtory is another very forcible attraction to the ſtudious man. There are few ſo inſignificant as not to be recorded in hiſtory, as the ſcene of ſome remarkable, or inſtructive event. Thus reaſon, and fancy become equally intereſted. The very ſpot on which they ſtood, ſhould no viſible ruins remain, becomes

becomes an object of importance, and curioſity.

" I doe love theſe auncient ruynes:
We never tread upon them but we ſet
Our foot upon ſome reverend hiſtory.
And, queſtionleſs, here, in this open court,
(Which now lies naked to the injuries
Of ſtormy weather,) ſome men lye enterred
Loved the church ſo well, and gave ſo largely to it,
They thought it ſhould have canopied their bones
Till Dombeſday: but all things have their end;
Churches and cities (which have diſeaſes like to men,)
Muſt have like death that we have".—

—Says an author*, whoſe works are now nearly in the ſtate of thoſe ruins he ſo well deſcribes, and whoſe lines

 are,

* Webſter, in his Ducheſs of Malfey.

are, very judiciouſly, choſen as a motto by the ingenious Mr. Groſe.

From whence ariſes the ſublime ſenſation that often mingles itſelf in our contemplation on very remote antiquity, and that, when there is nothing of the ſublime inherent in the object itſelf? May it not ariſe from an idea, almoſt imperceptibly obtruding itſelf, of the *vaſt ſpace*, with reſpect to *time*, which has rolled away ſince the formation of the object in queſtion?—The *immenſe number* of *years?*—The almoſt *infinite* changes in cuſtoms, dreſs, manners, &c. that have ſince taken place?—This ſolution (though propoſed not without heſitation, and rather as a hint for future enquiry, than as ſatisfactory in itſelf,)

itſelf,) ſeems not inconſiſtent with the generally-received doctrines of the ſource of the ſublime.

ON THE CONNEXION BETWIXT TASTE AND MORALS.

THE connexion between taſte, and the moral feelings has been often remarked on; but, in general, rather as analogy, than as a real union. Dr. Brown is, I believe, the only writer that ſeems to ſuſpect a more intimate alliance. For my part, I have little doubt but the principles of taſte are no other than the moral principles themſelves; but, as employed on different objects, ſo inveſted with other energies.—What, for inſtance, is the

love of *beauty*, a very leading principle, but a branch of that ſtrong attachment to order, fitneſs, and harmony, that the Creator has, benevolently, implanted in the human mind? What, again, the noble elevation of mind excited by the ſublime, but that innate love of greatneſs ſo conſpicuous in the moral world, as well as in the domains of fancy, and taſte? In confirmation of this it may, with ſome confidence, be alledged, that thoſe who poſſeſs this ſenſe, to any degree, in the latter reſpect, are *never* entirely deſtitute of it in the former.

Again:—When we contemplate a ſcene of tranquil paſtoral beauty, either in art or nature, with a pleaſure congenial to its object, do we not

(in

(in what way it is not difficult to decide,) connect it with the ideas of peace, and innocence, that, to a mind awake to the finer feelings either of taſte or morality, muſt ſeem the higheſt good, and chief end of exiſtence? —The parallel here ſo faintly ſketched might, I doubt not, be traced between every object of taſte, and every moral ſentiment *.

* I am not ignorant that ſome authors, thro' a metaphyſic ſpirit of generaliſing, aſcend much higher, and deduce the principles of taſte (and if of taſte, why not of morals, likewiſe?) from two ſources;—the *ſublime* emotion from *terror*, or a *ſenſe* of *danger*, and the feelings excited by *beauty*, from a *ſenſe* of *ſecurity*. Whatever may be ſaid of the *former* hypotheſis, the *latter* is, evidently, unfounded. But even to the *former* there are many objections of ſome weight. What, for

"Why then are ſo many men, confeſſedly of the higheſt order in the department of taſte, ſo frequently the diſgrace of humanity in point of morals?"—To this another queſtion might ſerve as anſwer.—"Do men, then, always act according to their feelings, or even their convictions?"—Thoſe who raiſe this objection ſeem to take for granted they do:—but the contrary is a truth too obvious to need enforcing. I contend that a high degree of ſenſibility to objects of taſte is incompatible

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for inſtance, ſhall we ſay of thoſe emotions which are cauſed by any inſtance of *patriotiſm*, or *general benevolence?* They are certainly of the ſublime kind:—and though, according to the ingenious Gerard, they may be connected with *quantity*, they ſeem to have little alliance with *terror*.

incompatible with all the malignant, ſelfiſh, meaner vices:—is directly oppoſed to falſehood, treachery, and all thoſe propenſities that render man inimical to man; and is, generally accompanied with candour, ſincerity, a love of truth, order, peace, and humanity.—I contend, alſo, that the deviations from rectitude in ſuch perſons is, uſually, rather the effect of a badly-conducted education, imprudent connexions, or other accidental cauſes, than owing to a wrong bias given by nature. Men of this ſtamp are, certainly, more ſuſceptible of good than of bad impreſſions. But vice, unfortunately for them, too often makes her moſt deſtructive inroads under the very banners of taſte; and thus, like the Carthaginian's treacherous detachment

ment at Cannæ, ſubdues her adverſaries under the ſpecious appearance of friendſhip and alliance.—But who will venture to decide that, even in theſe inſtances, the union of *taſte* and *virtue* is, altogether, unreal and imaginary?

ON THE PREDOMINANCE OF A FAVOURITE STUDY.

IT is well obſerved by Dr. Johnſon that "the predominance of a favourite ſtudy affects all ſubordinate operations of the intellect. Botany in the mind of Cowley turned into poetry." —A curious remark, and, almoſt, univerſally true. Few authors can be met with who do not diſplay ſome

ſkill

ſkill in this kind of intellectual chymiſtry. But whoever is adventurous enough to open the ponderous volume of Merſennus, will find ſome of the moſt ſtriking examples of it that I am acquainted with. Every ſubject, either in mathematics or muſic, paſſing through his mind, aſſimilates itſelf to religion. Among other curious obſervations of this kind, he tells us, in his antiquated French:—"That diſcords have the ſame effect among the concords of muſic, as the vices have among the virtues of mankind." And how does he make his ſimile hold? You ſhall hear.—"Theologians," he continues, "conclude that God permits ſin to remain unpuniſhed for a time, *only* that he may ſhew his grace and mercy more clearly in the

ſplendour

ſplendour of virtue, and in his elect. This might give occaſion to preachers to compare the uſe, and neceſſity of all ſins, to the uſe, and allowance of diſcords, which ſo greatly enrich harmony. And thus good men may draw that advantage from ſin that muſicians do from diſcords, and imitate God who turns the greateſt evils into the higheſt good."—Here we have, not only a ſimile, but a moſt ſingular account of the origin, and uſe of moral evil. This is the higheſt operation of the intellectual furnace, and might, almoſt, be called the *experimentum crucis*.

But the ſame author often diſplays ſentiments more liberal and enlightened than ſeem to belong to the age he

he lived in. Theſe that follow, and relate to the latitude that may be allowed to muſic, are ſuch as even our own times would ſcarce venture to approve.— "The ſkilful muſician ought, ſo far, to be ſuperior to rule, as to ſubmit to no law that can prejudice the beauty of his melodies, or the free movement of his parts, which compoſe the principal charms of muſic. For, ſince rules are founded only upon obſervations made concerning thoſe combinations of ſound that are more agreeable than the reſt to the framers of theſe rules, thoſe who are equally, or, perhaps, more ſkilful are certainly free to obſerve only ſuch rules as they may approve of; provided their ear is equally good, and their knowledge of the principles equally extenſive.

The

The rules of harmony are not like thoſe of geometry, which, in a manner, conſtrain the minds of all ſuch as have common ſenſe to embrace them. They *depend only upon the ear*, and upon *cuſtom*. Many muſicians admit two or three conſecutive fifths in their harmony, and maintain they have a good effect. In fact, they ſignify nothing, provided the compoſer, and his audience are ſatisfied with them."

ON THEOCRITUS.

THERE is a charm, in many parts of Theocritus, which, it is not very eaſy either to account for, or, even, deſcribe. It is not altogether ſimplicity, natural ſentiment, nor, merely, the

the aſtoniſhing ſweetneſs of his language. It may in part ariſe from the union of theſe excellencies; but more, I believe, from a certain art Theocritus, in a peculiar manner, poſſeſſes, by lively touches of deſcription, and a dramatic turn of expreſſion, of bringing every object he wiſhes immediately before our eyes.

The following ſhort poem, which, in the original muſt delight every reader, but, in a tranſlation, can barely pleaſe him, is a ſtriking proof of this. I give it in a proſe, and, almoſt, literal verſion, that more of the Author may be preſerved to the Engliſh reader. There is, certainly, greater beauty, and much leſs inconſiſtent puerility in the celebrated piece of mythology,

mythology, on which this poem is built, than in any other of thoſe fictions. The ſingular and romantic properties of the country where the ſcene is laid, diſtinguiſhed, in all ages, for the endowments both of nature and art, add a rich tint to the picture. Theſe ſources of pleaſure are much improved by the above-mentioned art of the Poet; who, by giving his little piece a dramatic form, is enabled to point out each object, as it riſes in ſucceſſion, with almoſt a graphical preciſion. It is, in fact, almoſt the only thing of it's kind; and might ſerve as a complete model for the paſtoral muſe.

[*Daphnis.*] "Lo! Polypheme, thy Galatea ſeeks thy fold, with ruſtic preſents

preſents hoping to regain the affection of her unfeeling herd-man lover. And thou, wretch, ſeeſt her not, loſt in the ſtrain thy Syrinx ſweetly breathes. Again, behold! ſhe calls thy dog, the faithful guardian of thy flocks. He ſtands at bay, and barks toward the the ſea. The clear waves ſhew her riſing through them, as they gently-murmuring break upon the pebbly beach. Take heed he ruſh not on the maid, and tear her gloſſy ſkin. See where ſhe languiſhes for thee, as, in the ſummer heats, the Acanthus droops her downy creſt. She flies purſuing lovers, to follow one who knows not love. Thus with a ſlender thread, ſhe ſtrives to move the unweildy rock.

Sure, Polypheme, to love deformity itſelf ſeems fair*".

[*Dametas.*] "I ſaw her, verily, by Pan I ſwear, I ſaw her. It is not† hid

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* It muſt be obſerved the introductory lines of this piece are omitted in the tranſlation. They deſcribe two ſhepherds, as uſual, contending for a prize, with a third as umpire. Of theſe, Daphnis aſſumes, ſuddenly, the character of one of the companions of Polypheme, and Dametas of Polypheme himſelf. Some other liberties are taken in the tranſlation, which, tho' unavoidable, certainly detract from the ſimplicity of the original. The uncommon ſweetneſs of the diction ſeemed to demand this kind of meaſured proſe, tho', in general, ſo deſervedly condemned.

† The κυμ' ελαθ' of the original is worthy to *fill the mouth* of Polypheme alone.

hid from me why thus ſhe ſeeks my fold; no, by my only precious eye that guides my ſteps till death.—But I on purpoſe wink, and will not ſeem to ſee her; but feign a love for ſome more happy maid. She, obſerving this, by Pan, conſumes with jealouſy, and often riſing ſuddenly from the ſea, glances ſuſpiciouſly toward my cave, and folded flocks. My dog too barks but as in ſport. For often, when I loved her, has he careſſed her as his miſtreſs, rubbing his playful head againſt her legs. Beholding me then fondle him in like manner, ſhe ſends him as her meſſenger. But I will ſtraight ſhut up my doors, until ſhe ſwear to wed me in my native iſle. For I have not the deformed face they tell me of. I have, aforetime, often

looked into the ſea, when calm. And my hairy cheeks were comely. My eye, too, appeared handſome, to my judgment. But my teeth ſurpaſſed, in ſplendour, the cleareſt Parian marble."

ON THE INSIDIOUS MODES OF ATTACK OF INFIDELS.

THE inſidious mode of attack adopted by modern infidelity has been well expoſed by ſeveral late writers; but, by none ſo well, I think, as by the author of the "Principles of Moral and Political Philoſophy." —"Infidelity," ſays he, "is ſerved up in every ſhape that is likely to allure, ſurprize, or beguile the imagination:—in a fable—a tale—a novel —a poem

— a poem—in interſperſed and broken hints—remote and oblique ſurmiſes—in books of travels, of philoſophy, of natural hiſtory—in a word, in any form, rather than the right one, that of profeſſed and regular diſquiſition. And becauſe the coarſe buffoonery and broad laugh of the old and rude adverſaries of the chriſtian faith, would offend the taſte, perhaps, rather than the virtue of this cultivated age, a graver irony, a more ſkilful, and delicate banter is ſubſtituted in their place. An eloquent hiſtorian, beſides his more direct, and therefore fairer attacks upon the credibility of the Evangelic hiſtory, has contrived to weave into his narration one continued *ſneer* upon the cauſe of Chriſtianity,

and the writings and characters of its ancient patrons. The knowledge which this author poſſeſſes of the frame and conduct of the human mind muſt have led him to obſerve that ſuch attacks do their execution without enquiry. *Who can refute a ſneer?* Who can compute the number, much leſs, one by one, ſcrutinize the juſtice of thoſe diſparaging inſinuations which crowd the pages of this elaborate hiſtory? What reader ſuſpends his curioſity, or calls off his attention from the principal narrative to examine references, to ſearch into the foundation, or to weigh the reaſon, propriety, and force of every tranſient ſarcaſm, and ſly alluſion by which the Chriſtian teſtimony is depreciated and traduced?

duced? and by which, nevertheleſs, he may find his faith afterwards unſettled and perplexed *."

Among theſe *ſneers* on religion, few are more remarkable, or better calculated for miſchief than the following ſtory, which I write down, by memory, from a little pamphlet ſuppoſed to be the work of Dr. Franklin. It's aim is evidently at the principles, in general, of every religion: and, though a ſort of random ſhot, has not been unproductive of evil. It

* I make no apology, either to the author, or the public, for uſing this long quotation; as I think the merit of contributing, or endeavouring to contribute, ſomething towards the wider diffuſion of ſuch paſſages ſcarcely inferior to that of writing them.

has furniſhed witlings, who could not invent for themſelves, with the means of raiſing a laugh in public, at what they tremble in ſecret.

"Not long ago, a Swediſh miniſter aſſembled ſome of the principal among the Seſquehannah Indians, and began to inſtruct them in the chief hiſtorical facts on which his religion was founded. He told them, in order, of the fall of man from a ſtate of happineſs by eating an apple, of his redemption by our Lord, &c. &c.—When he had done ſpeaking, an old Indian roſe up to thank him. "All that you have now told us is," ſaid he, "*very good*. It is, indeed, not right to *eat apples*. It is much better to make them all into *cyder*. We are all much obliged

to

to you for coming ſo far to tell us ſome of the things you have heard from your mothers. We will, in return, relate to you ſome of the good things we have heard from our's."

"Before the earth was cultivated," continued the orator, "man lived entirely on what he got by hunting. When that reſource failed, he was obliged to ſtarve, or ſhift as he could. One day, when two of our forefathers had taken a very fine, fat deer, and had made a fire, and began to roaſt it for their dinner, there ſuddenly appeared from the clouds the figure of a very beautiful young woman, who, gradually, deſcended on the top of yon high hill that you ſee over the blue mountains. They ſaid, in aſtoniſhment,

toniſhment, one to another:—This is ſome deity, who has ſmelt the ſavour of our roaſted proviſion, and is come down to partake of it with us. Let us offer her ſome."—They, accordingly, preſented her with the roaſted tongue of the animal. She was pleaſed with the taſte, and, after thanking them for it, told them that if they would return to that ſpot in about the ſpace of thirteen months, they would find ſomewhat to requite their kindneſs, and enable them to live without the neceſſity of daily labour. They were punctual to their time; and, to their great ſurprize, found, where her right hand had touched the ground, a plentiful crop of maize or Indian corn. Where her left hand had reſted, they found kidney

ney beans. And, where her backſide had ſate on the earth, they were preſented with tobacco."—The miniſter, enraged at this idle tale, could no longer contain his wrath, but, interrupting him, cried:—"What I told you are ſacred truths; but all this is a mere fable,—a childiſh ſtory."—"Friend," anſwered the orator, "they ſeem not to have done thee juſtice in thy education. They have not taught thee the neceſſary art of common civility. We liſtened, with the moſt ſilent attention, to thy ſtories. Thou oughteſt, therefore, to have lent a patient ear to our's."

This ſtory is, confeſſedly, good, as an afternoon ſtory, over a glaſs of wine.

wine. But is it true?—If it is, ſurely, the profound ignorance, and ſimplicity of a ſavage, can never ſeem to convey any really detrimental reflection on religion. Relate to ſuch a one the leaſt conteſted facts that hiſtory can afford.—Let them be, if the Doctor pleaſes, a narration of the growing ſplendor, and redoubtable proweſs of his riſing common-wealth.—How could the poor ſavage repay him for his entertainment, but in the very ſame homely coin? As to the zeal of the Paſtor, though, perhaps, in this inſtance injudiciouſly conducted, it cannot be judged a proper ſubject of ridicule.

ON A PASSAGE IN TACITUS.

THE moſt remarkable inſtance of deſpotiſm, raiſed to its higheſt pitch, that I have ever read, or heard of, is that exhibited by Tiberius, in the annals of Tacitus. It is not cruelty, or indignity, or even both united, that could ſting the mind of a liberal man ſo much as ſuch an inſult on the common ſenſe, and common feelings of mankind.—He found the ſenate, it ſeems, rather ſlow to underſtand, and execute his obſcure hints relating to the death of Agrippina, and her ſon: —that they read his accuſations†, "in fear and ſilence," rather than with a ready

† Magno pavore et ſilentio.

ready obedience. He ſent, therefore, other letters. In theſe, he complained that the Imperial dignity was publicly eluded by the fraud of one of their body;—Junius Ruſticus, who, at the reading the former letters, had admoniſhed the ſenate not to be too haſty in their deciſions. He now demanded a full and perfect obedience to his deſires. He, finally, inſiſts that they ſhould * no longer heſitate (*not, indeed, to proceed to the laſt extremities againſt his enemies, for that was forbidden them,* but) to teſtify themſelves *prepared* for *any* vindictive meaſures;

* Nec ultra deliberatum, quo minus non quidem extrema decernerent, *id enim vetitum,* ſed paratos ad ultionem vi principis impediri teſtarentur.

ſures; but, at the ſame time, *ſeem to be with-held from them only by the authority of their prince.*

The character of this Emperor deſerves, indeed, the particular attention of the moraliſt, and philoſopher; as it is, undoubtedly, one of the moſt artful, as well as vicious, that is recorded in hiſtory. He was the principal cauſe of a very remarkable revolution; — the *precipitating* his country into a moſt abject ſlavery. Auguſtus had, it is true, ſufficiently *prepared* all things for the yoke: and his ſucceſſor found the ſenate, if not the people, abundantly ſervile at his firſt taking the reins of government in his hand. But it is certain no one but Tiberius could, in ſo ſhort a period

a period of time, have ſmoothed the way for the horrid cruelties, and abominable luſts of a Caligula, or a Nero.

He poſſeſſed, in a remarkable manner, the art of *inſinuating* his intentions, without openly announcing them, in his ſpeeches, and letters; and of juſtifying the moſt violent acts of tyranny, by ſpecious precedents from antiquity. He was, moreover, very cautious and ſlow in all his meaſures: taking great care, from time to time, not only to ſound the minds of the people, but alſo to counteract the effects any violent meaſures might produce in them, by well-timed acts of moderation, and clemency.—It cannot be doubted but that if, inſtead of Tiberius, ſuch an open and impo-

litic

litic tyrant as Nero had aſcended the throne, the Romans would have entirely regained their liberty by ſome effort of their yet unextinguiſhed ardour for the public good.—Tacitus, at the end of the ſixth book of his annals, ſums up the character of this fox, (Vulpecula Heinſius calls him,) in the following conciſe but highly comprehenſive manner.—* "Morum

* His manners alſo varied in different periods of his life. Both his public and private character was exemplary while in a private ſtation, or in office under Auguſtus. Crafty and ſecret, with the affectation of virtue, as long as Germanicus, and Druſus ſurvived. Fluctuating between vice and virtue during his mother's life:—Deteſtable in cruelty, but private in his luſts, while he either loved, or feared Sejanus. Laſtly,

quoque tempora illi diverſa: egregia vita, famaque, quoad privatus, vel in imperiis ſub Auguſto fuit: occultum ac ſubdolum fingendis virtutibus, donec Germanicus ac Druſus ſuperfuêre. Idem, inter bona mala mixtus, incolumâ matre: inteſtabilis ſævitia, ſed obtectis libidinibus, dum Sejanum dilexit, timuitve. Poſtremo in ſcelera, ſimul ac dedecora prorupit, poſtquam, remoto pudore et metu, ſuo tantum ingenio utebatur."—An execrable climax of tyranny and vice!

Laſtly, he broke forth into the moſt diſgraceful crimes, when, all objects of fear or ſhame being removed, he gave full ſcope to his natural diſpoſition.

ON THE DECLINE OF POETICAL TASTE AND GENIUS.

IT is no unuſual thing, at preſent, for us to complain of the decline of poetical genius, and poetical taſte, and ſometimes to wonder at the cauſe. This declenſion is, however, a neceſſary effect of the national change in manners, and that change an unavoidable conſequence of the growing proſperity, and encreaſing luxury of the ſtate. Poetry, or, at leaſt, poetical taſte, without which poetry could hardly exiſt, invariably follows, and conforms to the various ſtages of a nation's exiſtence. A people who are yet in their infancy, as a ſtate, delight in the rude, but nervous and fanciful

ſtyle of poetry, full of bold imagery, and vivid deſcription. A nation juſt opening to refinement uſually blends a due proportion of reaſon, and ſentiment with the efforts of imagination. In this due proportion conſiſts the utmoſt perfection of poetry. It is from it, in this ſtage, that the beſt critics have ſought their rules, and illuſtrations. In ſuch a period, or (as may be not injuriouſly conjectured,) a little earlier did Homer write; from whom Ariſtotle drew thoſe precepts which have ſerved both as the foundation, and the model to future criticiſm. When, by exceſs of refinement, a country becomes feeble and enervate, it's taſte in poetry aſſumes the ſame character. Bold and animated figures will no longer be borne. They

ſeem

ſeem rant, and fuſtian in the eyes of the ſupercilious petit-maitre, whoſe ideas never ſwelled to the dignity of a metaphor. Wit, enfeebled reaſon, and cold correctneſs take the lead. To all theſe changes a poet, be the turn of his genius what it may, muſt, unavoidably, conform.

"Is poetry, then, ſo nearly connected with barbarity of manners?—What a ſhocking idea!—Let it then go:—It is well exchanged for the eaſe, gaiety, and faſhionable delights of the age we live in."—But no:—Poetry is not thus allied to ſavage barbarity. It is indiſſolubly united to that happy medium between uncivilized nature, and exceſs of refinement, which, it were worth all the

wiſdom of politicians, and all the genius of moraliſts, to render leſs tranſitory and unſtable. It is connected with ſimplicity of manners, true greatneſs of mind, true honour, and contempt of ſordid intereſt, when oppoſed to it:—In ſhort—with that native energy of mind, which, variouſly modified, is not only the characteriſtic of genius, but the parent of all the nobler virtues.

To ſay that we have ſlid, and are ſtill ſliding lower, beneath this happy ſtation, would look too like ſplenetic melancholy; and, to proceed to prove it by examples, would ſeem a common-place ſatire upon the times. I might ſay, with the hiſtorian *, that we

* Livy, in his preface.

we were arrived at a period "when we can no longer bear either our vices, or their remedies." But this was a Roman hiſtorian. *Our* age has adopted other notions. *Our* vices are, by the ſophiſtry of thoſe moſt devoted to them, ſoftened down to venial errors, and their remedies would ſeem inſupportable ruin.

But what are the chiefly-operating cauſes of this declenſion, both in taſte, and morals?—I affect not the moraliſt. I might, otherwiſe, ſay it muſt be luxury that has worked an effect ſo often produced and bewailed before. I might, elſe, proceed to ſhew in what particular modes that luxury has operated. But it's undeniable conſequences are enough for my purpoſe:

—and ſome of it's collateral effects I will mark out as cooperating, and accelerating the downfal of genuine poetry.

One of the greateſt and moſt characteriſtic ſymptoms of poetic genius is an innate love of unſophiſticated nature, amounting almoſt to enthuſiaſm. This, never much the general taſte, is now become almoſt entirely obſolete, and unfaſhionable. A young perſon that, early in life, dares to manifeſt this turn of mind, is in the utmoſt peril of being totally given up as a very odd fellow;—one that, in the common phraſe, will "do himſelf no good." He does not love good company. The ſociety of nature, and of the God of nature is not, it ſhould

ſeem

ſeem, fit company for a rational being. —"But, is not nature, and its God to be ſought, likewiſe, in the ſociety of beings like himſelf;—creatures who are his beſt and nobleſt work?" Yes —but it is, thro' our own perverſeneſs, and the gradual influence of luxury, and faſhion, nature, in general, perverted, diſtorted, and depraved. No word, no air, no geſture of the body but what is regulated by art, copied from ſuperior frivolity, or the diſguſting effect of a ſort of automatous habit. By beings ſuch as theſe a young perſon is ſoon laughed out of this romantic propenſity. He beholds every thing around him formed on a different model, to which, by degrees, he is obliged to conform; and devoted to, what are denominat-

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ed more ſolid purſuits, to which he alſo, at laſt, deems it neceſſary to be attached. The effect of this in deadning genius need not be farther deſcribed.

The preſent tone of converſation, firſt copied by the great from our more frivolous neighbours, and afterward aukwardly imitated by the inferior ranks is inimical, not only to poetic excellence, but to excellence of every kind. That noble ſwelling and overflowing of the mind, and heart, which we call enthuſiaſm, the great origin of dignified virtue in every age, cannot, in ſuch ſociety, but be derided. It is the very oppoſite of that contraction of intellect which fixes the attention wholly on the

the minutiæ of life, and enervates it for any great or uſeful purpoſe. Before converſation became a ſeparate ſcience, we contented ourſelves with thoſe plain civilities of the heart, that every well-diſpoſed heart could eaſily pay. A man ſtored with all the learning of paſt ages;—endued with energy of mind to put thoſe ſtores into motion, and with gentleneſs and benevolence of ſoul, now finds he has ſtill another ſtudy, perhaps the moſt difficult of all to native ingenuity, by which alone he can render his acquirements of any uſe to himſelf, or others. A deſire to oblige,—a diſpoſition to be pleaſed, are not ſufficient. He muſt acquire the mechanical habits of addreſs, the reigning cant, the etiquette

etiquette du jour, or he had better remain locked up in his ſtudy.

Thus, were their effects more fully traced, ſhould we find the narrow-minded Genius of Commerce, and his attendant Luxury acting, on one hand, on our manners;—the cold, preciſe, formal philoſophic ſpirit*, improperly applied to our literary productions, on the other;—with encreaſing Effeminacy, and Indolence, as occaſional auxiliaries:—all ſurrounding the poor Muſe, and either dreſſing her out in their own frittered, unbecoming trappings, or chilling her into total ſilence.

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* The effect of this, untouched on here, would require a much more elaborate eſſay, itſelf.

ON THE DIFFERENT STYLES OF MUSIC.

THE neglect of Engliſh muſic, and Engliſh muſicians has been frequently, and much lamented by unſucceſsful profeſſors of the art among us. But this neglect ſeems founded in reaſon, and juſtice. Except in the inſtance of Purcel, and a few others, there is a deplorable vacuity of fancy, taſte, and feeling in muſic of our own culture. This defect, in an art where the *ſublime* and *pathetic* reign with ſuch unbounded ſway, has been ſo long experienced, as moſt probably to render us obſtinately deaf, for ſome time, to the moſt elegant muſical productions of our own countrymen, ſhould

ſhould any ſuch hereafter be produced. An Engliſh name on the title of a muſic book is enough, almoſt, to prevent our opening it; and, certainly, from entering with any intereſt upon the performance of it's contents.

How it has happened that a country which has given birth to ſo many excellent poets, many of them ſoaring into the higheſt regions of fancy, and invention, ſhould have, in general, produced muſicians ſo inſipid, ſpiritleſs, and heavy, would be rather a curious object of enquiry. Idle ſolutions of this difficulty might be ſought from the influence of climate, character of the natives, &c.; which, with a little ingenious ſophiſtry, would make up a pretty

a pretty ſyſtem enough. But theſe, if they held good at all, would hold nearly equally ſo againſt the effects of poetic genius, and of fancy in all its operations. Neither do the natives of this country ſeem deficient in that natural ſenſibility, from whence we are to ſeek the origin both of muſic, and all the finer arts. Perhaps we owe this defect to the want of ſome regular muſical ſeminary, reſembling thoſe of other countries, which however ridiculed, and condemned by prejudice here, are, certainly, except in one reſpect, (and that not, in fact, owing to them, but rather the miſerable avarice of parents,) entirely blameleſs; and would, I ſuppoſe, if properly conducted, be productive rather of national good, than harm.

However

However this may be, we, certainly, have (no very cutting reproach, will the reader ſay,) no muſical ſtyle of our own to boaſt of. Italy, and France alone, of all the nations in Europe, have a ſpecies of muſic peculiar to themſelves. That of the latter, evidently, the offspring of the other; but, from a naturalization of many years, it has received ſo peculiar a tincture from the national ſtyle, as, to ſeem almoſt a diſtinct ſpecies. This ſtyle, ſo decried by Rouſſeau, and ſome others who are perpetually in extremes, and, perhaps, deſervedly in vocal muſic, is, yet, not without its merit in inſtrumental. It has given a very agreeable caſt to Davaux's Quartettos, where it predominates, in many parts, over the Italian manner.

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The Italian ſtyle of compoſition is now univerſally allowed to be unrivalled; and has either formed the baſis of, or united itſelf to, the muſic of every European nation. The Germans, eminent as they at preſent are in muſical excellence, are certainly indebted to this ſtyle more than even the French. But, in their inſtrumental muſic, they have added more improvements than either the French, or any other nation. They have given a proper degree of laborious ſolidity to the utmoſt refinements of air; and have thrown in a tincture of wild and national, but extremely pleaſing melody; which, in my opinion, has given the laſt finiſh, and the higheſt intereſt to muſic. They have alſo enlarged the boundaries of com-

poſition, by admitting a greater variety, both in ſubject, and modulation; and, in fact, opened quite a new career to muſical genius.

One of the firſt of theſe improvers of the Italian ſtyle, and, certainly, the beſt, with reſpect to vocal muſic, was Handel. No Italian, either before or ſince his time, has ſhewn ſuch boundleſs invention, or ſuch laborious and happily-applied art. But, even in him, the Italian leaven is, throughout, apparent. He, in my opinion, rather imparts a greater ſolidity and vigour to this ſtyle, by his energetic harmonies, than adds any thing to it new, in the way of national melody. His genius ſeems more unwilling than even the Italian to ſubmit to the requiſite

quiſite terms of alliance with poetry. He not unfrequently leaves all expreſſion far behind him, and takes the lead in a variety of unmeaning diviſions, which have the leaſt imaginable connection with his ſubject. If, however, examples of theſe deviations (and theſe, poſſibly, may be defended by the neceſſity of compliance with the vagaries of taſte, and popular ſingers,) are to be ſought in Handel, examples, alſo, of the chaſteſt rectitude may, in him, be found. He has many *ſongs, in which, perhaps, no

* The ſong of "Pious Orgies" in the oratorio of Judas Maccabæus is, I think, a complete model for a ſacred ſong:—much more ſo, in point of propriety, accent, and in every reſpect but that of pathos, to the much applauded air in the Meſſiah, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

ſuperfluous note can be met with; or any paſſage that is not, in the higheſt degree, appropriate and expreſſive. It muſt, indeed, be acknowledged even by the enemies of Handel's genius, who are not few, that he gives into theſe unmeaning excurſions, only, when his ſubject is, by nature, light and unimportant. Where his words are ſublime, pathetic, tenderly amorous, or humbly precatory, he confines himſelf within boundaries, which, tho' juſt conſiſtent with the requiſite variety, admit not of the ſmalleſt degree of levity, or indecorum.

But Handel's fame muſt reſt entirely on his vocal performances. His inſtrumental muſic, with ſome few exceptions, is inelegant; frequently rough

rough and unpoliſhed, even for the times he wrote in; and, ſometimes, entirely copied from his vocal works. Haydn, of all authors ancient or modern, has ſhewn himſelf the greateſt maſter of all the varieties of expreſſion, in inſtrumental muſic, that ever exiſted. What ſeems very uncommon is, that the learning exhibited in the curious and elaborate texture of his parts, bears an exact proportion to the fancy that invented them; and his judgment in keeping theſe parts ſo clear from confuſion, and perplexity, ſeems fully equal to either. In neatneſs, poſſibly, of muſical phraſe, in compactneſs, and ſelection of paſſages, he may be rivalled by ſome of his pupils. But who ſhall rival his learning and invention?—

—New ſubjects, that would ſerve other compoſers during their lives are often laviſhed away in a ſingle piece. Neither, has any other compoſer ever attempted even to imitate his deeply-pathetic, and, often, almoſt tragic expreſſion.

What may be, hereafter, done for the improvement of this enchanting art, it is not eaſy to conjecture!—It *may* be ſtill farther enriched, and diverſified; but, more probably, will degenerate into the minutiæ of falſe taſte, and gothic over-refinement.—As in other arts, ſo in this, he would deſerve well of the public, who could draw, with preciſion, the line between excellence, and the firſt approach of kindred depravation. Our forefathers found

found this line in Corelli. At preſent, ſome think they have diſcovered it in Handel's works. While others ſuppoſe even the lateſt ſtyle of compoſition will admit of further improvement. One thing is pretty certain: — However future muſicians may vary their ſtyle of compoſition in other reſpects, in point of rapid execution, manual performance cannot, from the nature of things, much longer keep pace with them.

ON MORAL NECESSITY.

NO greater inroads have been made on the common opinions, and common ſenſe of mankind, than, of late, by certain philoſophers, in the much

diſputed, and never to be decided, article of *neceſſity*.—Even, if we ſuppoſe an author to begin on a right foundation;— with incontrovertible data, it is certain that, by imperceptibly warping his arguments deduced from theſe, almoſt any thing may *ſeem* proved. Nothing is more frequent than theſe gradually ſophiſtical, and deceptive inferences. Sometimes, they appear the natural effect of a love of paradox, and ſingularity; — a reſolution to make good a point, at all events:— but, I believe, this is oftener done thro' a ſecret bias to a beloved ſyſtem of one's own fabrication, than thro' any *real* intention to deceive.

In a point of ſo much importance both to religion, and morals, in whom ſhall

ſhall we venture to confide?—Shall we truſt the metaphyſical reaſoner, the philoſopher who looks into the human heart thro' the *ſpectacles of books*, the fanciful poet, or the man of mere common ſenſe?—It will not, perhaps, be ſafe entirely to truſt either. Let us ourſelves, as far as we are able, invert the mental eye upon itſelf; watch the windings of our will, from mere *volition* to *action* itſelf; and laſtly decide, not from argument *alone*, ſo liable to be, almoſt inſenſibly, warped by prejudice, and ſyſtem, but by, at leaſt, an *equal*, attention to the dictates of common ſenſe, and common feelings. Theſe, duly ſeconded by reaſon, will not, we may aſſure ourſelves, lead us wrong in any point, of which the full knowledge

ledge is neceſſary to our well-being, or improvement in happineſs.—In a word, what more *reaſonable* ſyſtem can we form than the following, which *common ſenſe*, alſo, ſo well approves:—That liberty, and of courſe reſponſibility, encreaſe, in exact proportion, from the ideot or lunatic, to the higheſt degree of human rationality?—How much more conformable is this ſcheme to the religion of Him who has told us that "to whom much is given, of him ſhall much be required," than the gloomy doctrine of univerſal and helpleſs neceſſity!

But, in doing this juſtice to the common ſenſe of mankind, let us not, as ſome have done, throw too much into the ſcale; to the detri-

ment,

ment, or entire excluſion of reaſon, and argument. Why theſe faculties ſhould be ever disjoined, though from the very nature of man, ever tending to one extreme or other, this is generally the caſe, it is not eaſy to decide.—Dr. Beattie's popular work on the immutability of truth may ſeem, in ſome degree, included in this cenſure. It is, in fact, an excellent bulwark for common ſenſe to retire to from the encroachments of metaphyſics. But, does it not, on quitting the defenſive, ſometimes appear to carry the war *farther* into the enemy's country, than juſtice would demand? —It teaches us, very properly, to look, with a ſuſpicious eye, upon all metaphyſical inveſtigation that contradicts the common ſenſe of mankind.

kind. So far it is right. But, neither, is common ſenſe entirely to be truſted alone. It evidently may miſtake, tho' not, perhaps, in points eſſential to our welfare, or ſecurity. It was, formerly, eſteemed a ſelf-evident principle of common ſenſe that the earth ſtood ſtill, and the ſun moved around it. This has, ſince, been proved falſe by experiment, and analogy. In this caſe common ſenſe was deceived, and was ſet right again by reaſon. The truth ſeems to be, that reaſon was given us as an aſſiſtant, and in ſome caſes as a guide to common ſenſe. It extends thoſe reſearches, of which the latter can only attain the firſt rudiments. In all caſes which concern our preſent ſtate of being, and which it is neceſſary for our well-

being

being we ſhould know, common ſenſe was meant as a ſufficient and unerring guide. But as we are endued with the ſublimer powers of reaſon alſo, there can be nothing wrong in exerting theſe powers as far as our nature will permit, and our religion (which may ſometimes ſeem ſuperior, but never, if rightly underſtood, oppoſed to theſe faculties,) will authoriſe us.

On the ſubject, and in the defence, of free-will, a topic ſo often obſcured in clouds of uſeleſs argument, and which, it is probable, neither common ſenſe, or reaſon will ever diſcuſs to the ſatisfaction of all, I have no where ſeen more forcible or more conciſely-expreſſed reaſoning than the following, extracted from the Monthly Review.

Review. Whether the ſentiments of the reviewers themſelves, or, the reſult of the arguments of the author under conſideration, I do not know. It is, however, neceſſary to premiſe that it ſuppoſes the Deity, according to the ſcheme of neceſſity, to be the only agent in the univerſe. If this be the caſe, ("and that it *is* ſo, in the ſcheme of neceſſity, is clearly proved,) how can we conceive that there ſhould be either ſuffering, or diſorder in his works? Nothing but good can come from his poſitive act: his power could have prevented deviation in *mind*, and diſorder in *matter*; and, if you ſay that diſorder, and ſuffering may be means of amendment, we have little conception what amendment is, in the doctrine of neceſſity;—it is ſomething

thing like mending a watch, which would have had no occaſion for ſuch an operation if the maker had been able or willing to finiſh it with a more maſterly hand, or had condeſcended to interpoſe, in order to prevent it's deviations. Since the buſineſs of man muſt be done for him by a force which his will cannot reſiſt, by a *real* external influence, under the illuſion of ſpontaneity, and the appearance of liberty, why not do it to better purpoſe? Why not force him to be happy? We have, really, no idea of what could engage infinite benevolence, and power to mix ſuffering in the lot of humanity, except it was the expediency of rendering man the author of his own happineſs, *by a capacity of acting*,

acting, and an innate power of improving the diſpenſations of Providence to his advancement in happineſs."

ON LIVY.

WHAT reader, of any taſte, or diſcernment, does not deeply regret the mutilated ſtate in which Livy has reached poſterity!—Of all hiſtorians, whoſe works are ſtill extant, he may be ſaid to be the only one of any bulk, whoſe narrative a reader can peruſe without frequent wearineſs, and diſguſt. His whole work is like a well wrought and vividly-coloured picture, by ſome capital artiſt. The attention is ſeized and detained by the

the more eſſential objects, while leſs important or ſubordinate events are thrown into ſhade. There are no laboured minutiæ to bewilder the memory, but all together forms one whole, ſtriking, uniform, and magnificent piece. This is more particularly true of the former part of his hiſtory, till the war with Antiochus. After this, from the rapidly-encreaſing greatneſs of the empire, events become multiplied, and ſcattered too widely for any hiſtorian diſtinctly to treat.

How far, to attain this valuable end, truth may have been ſacrificed to ornament, is not now eaſy to determine. It may, however, be obſerved, that, on comparing him with

the elder hiſtorians whom he followed, ſeveral of whom are ſtill extant*, no conſiderable event ſeems either omitted, or diſguiſed.

To many, the *eloquence* of Livy may ſeem ſuperabundant. I ſay of Livy, "becauſe (ſay theſe objectors,) we cannot imagine it poſſible that the rough, unpoliſhed heroes of ancient Rome, of whom many left the plough for the conſular or dictatorial inſignia, could, in the remote and ruder periods,

* Of theſe Polybius, and Diodorus Siculus are the chief.—If Livy can be ſuſpected of any *wilful* miſrepreſentation, it is, in what he, probably, eſteemed the event moſt diſgraceful to his countrymen:—the cauſe of the retreat of the Gauls, after the ſack of Rome. Here, he materially differs from Polybius.

riods, have *really* harangued as he has made them:—nor, had that been the caſe, were there, at that time hiſtorians, capable of handing down to poſterity ſuch finiſhed diſplays of elocution."

But theſe eloquent appendages, even ſuppoſing them not genuine, but, even in *matter*, as well as *manner*, (no very likely notion,) ſolely of Livy's invention, form no reaſonable objection to the work. They ſuperadd a finiſh,—a glow of colouring, without overſtepping the modeſty of nature, or hurting the ſimplicity of truth. Though they captivate, and, in ſome degree ſeduce, the reader's imagination, they bewilder not, or miſlead his judgment. The main

ſeatures of reality ſtill remain unaltered; nor, can I ſee why it is not as allowable for an hiſtorian, as for a painter, to colour the merely ornamental parts higher than nature, provided he does not, for a moment, allure our attention from eſſential truth. The fancy like the eye muſt ſometimes be appealed to,—be ſoothed; and the only limit that ſhould be ſet to this pleaſing deluſion is, the leaving the judgment at entire liberty to act, uninfluenced by any of theſe ornamental attractions.

Many Engliſh authors have cloſely copied Livy in his narration; but ſcarcely one has attempted to imitate his manner. They ſeem entirely to loſe ſight of his peculiar excellencies,

as

as an hiſtorian, and have contented themſelves with a detail of his events, in all the dry fidelity of a gazette.—But let us try whether any effect can be produced by a cloſe tranſlation of one of his intereſting ſcenes.

"The conſul Cornelius, marching from Saticula, led his army incautiouſly into a hollow way through the foreſt, which was, on all ſides, beſet by parties of the enemy's troops. Nor, did he perceive them, impending almoſt over his head, till it became impoſſible for him to retreat in any time. During the interval the Samnites were occupied in marching their army down from the heights, P. Decius, a tribune, diſcovered an eminence, on that ſide where they

were deſcending, which hung over their very camp, and was difficult of acceſs to troops encumbered with baggage, but not to a light armed party. "Do you ſee, Cornelius," ſaid he to the terrified conſul, "that height above the enemy? It is the citadel both of our hope, and ſafety, if we expeditiouſly occupy what theſe blind Samnites have neglected. Nor do I deſire more than the picked men, and the pikes of one legion. With theſe when I ſhall have gained the ſummit, do you proceed without fear, and ſave your army and yourſelf. Neither ſhall the enemy, thus expoſed to our attack on all ſides, be able to ſtir without entire deſtruction. The good fortune of Rome, or our own valour be, afterwards, our ſafe-guard." Being highly

highly praiſed by the conſul, and having received his little troop, he proceeded, in ſilence, through the foreſt. Nor was he diſcovered by the enemy till he had almoſt gained the deſired ſtation. Then all, at once, dreading and admiring the atcheivement, turned their eyes upon him; and gave both an opportunity to the conſul to lead on his forces to a place of ſafety, and to Decius to gain the ſummit. The Samnites, in doubt and heſitation, their ſtandards fluctuating to and fro, loſt both opportunities: and could now neither purſue the conſul, except through the ſame defile where he had juſt before been expoſed to their javelins, nor march their forces up the hillock occupied over them by Decius. But as both their anger, and

the vicinity of the ſtation, as well as the ſmallneſs of the number of theſe intruders, excited them moſt againſt the party which had thus raviſhed the victory out of their hands, they at one time, began to ſurround the mount on all ſides, with an intention to intercept Decius from the conſul; at another, to leave a paſſage open, that they might attack him on his march down to the valley. Decius, at firſt, hoped he ſhould have an opportunity to attack them in their progreſs up the hill:—afterwards, he could not but wonder they neither began the attack, nor, if deterred from that by diſadvantage of ground, began to incloſe him with a trench. Calling his centurions about him, "What," cries he, "means this ignorance of war, or

rather

rather ſloth of the enemy? By what means could ſuch as theſe overcome the Sidicines, or the inhabitants of Campania? Ye may diſcern them moving their ſtandards to and fro; at one time, uniting in a body, and now again diſjoining themſelves. No one begins the action; when, by this time, we might have been totally intercepted by a deep trench. We ſhall ſeem too like ſuch an enemy if we remain here a moment longer than is convenient for us. But come let us explore, while it is yet day light, where they have ſet watches, and how we may eaſieſt eſcape from hence." All which things he himſelf, wrapped up in a common ſoldier's cloak, with his centurions in like manner diſguiſed from the enemies notice, carefully explored,

explored. Watches then being ſet, he orders the teſſera to be given to the reſt. When the ſecond watch ſounded they were to repair armed, and in ſilence to his tent. When they, according to order, had thus convened: "This ſilence, my fellow ſoldiers," ſays he, "omitting for the preſent all military acclamation, is to be obſerved in liſtening to what I have to offer. When I ſhall have given my opinion, let thoſe, that agree with it, paſs in ſilence to the right hand: by a majority the queſtion will be decided. Now hear what I propoſe. The enemy ſurrounds you, not as fugitives after a defeat, nor as loiterers by delay. By valour have ye occupied this ſtation: by valour muſt ye eſcape from it. By coming

coming hither ye have preſerved a noble army of Romans. By breaking from hence ye muſt preſerve yourſelves. Ye, few as ye are, who have effected the preſervation of numbers, are worthy that ye ſhould require no aſſiſtance, yourſelves, from any one. We have to do with an enemy which, through ſloth, but yeſterday, let ſlip the opportunity of deſtroying our whole army; nor perceived this advantageous poſt, hanging as it does, over their very heads, till we had already ſeized on it. They neither, by their ſuperior number, deterred an handful of men from this aſcent, nor when we had gained it, and they had ſtill ſo much day light left, did they attempt to intercept us by a trench.

Thoſe

Thoſe whom ye have eluded thus when awake, it is now neceſſary ye ſhould deceive in ſleep. For ſuch is our preſent ſituation, that I am rather an index of neceſſity to you, than an author of advice. Nor can ye now deliberate whether ye ſhould ſtay, or depart; ſince, excepting your arms, and your courage, fortune has left nothing in your power. Ye muſt die by hunger, and thirſt, if ye fear the enemy's ſword more than becomes a Roman. There is only one way to preſerve our lives:—that conſiſts in our breaking from hence, and departing to the army. This *muſt* be effected either in the day time, or by night. Here again we have ſtill leſs reaſon to doubt: ſince, if we wait for day,

day, what hope have ye that we ſhall not be effectually intercepted by the enemy who now, as ye ſee, totally ſurround the hill we are upon by a rampart of their bodies? But if, as is really the caſe, night be the moſt opportune for our eruption, this very hour of the night is the moſt proper for the attempt. We are met at the ſounding of the ſecond watch, at which time, all men lie buried in the deepeſt ſleep. Ye may paſs through their ſlumbering poſt, either deceiving them by your ſilence, or, if they perceive you, ſtriking terror into them by a ſudden ſhout. Only follow me, as before. I will invoke the ſame Fortune which led us hither. Let thoſe, to whom this counſel ſeems ſalutary, paſs to the right."

All

All paſſed to the right hand, and followed through the ſpaces neglected by the enemy's advanced guards. They had, already, reached the middle of their camp, when a ſoldier climbing over the bodies of the ſleeping enemy, by ſtriking againſt one of their ſhields, unintentionally, gave the alarm. A centinel being awakened by this noiſe, when he had likewiſe arouſed his neighbour, proceeded to alarm all the reſt; ignorant yet whether they were friends or enemies; —whether the troop of Decius were breaking from their confinement, or the conſul was attacking the camp. Decius finding he could not deceive them, commanding his ſoldiers to raiſe a ſudden ſhout, aſtoniſhed thoſe with ſudden fear, who were, already,

torpid

torpid with ſleep. Thus overwhelmed with terror, and diſmay, they could neither, on the inſtant, arm themſelves, nor make proper reſiſtance, nor purſue Decius. Amidſt this trepidation, and tumult of the Samnites, the Roman troop, killing thoſe of the enemy they met, got to the conſul's camp. There was ſtill ſome part of the night unexpired, and they were already in ſafety, when Decius proceeded. — "Thus has ſucceſs, and thus ever may ſucceſs attend valour, my fellow ſoldiers. All ſucceeding ages will celebrate both your expedition, and your retreat. But there is need of day light properly to emblazon ſuch deeds of fortitude. It would be unworthy of you, returning, with

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with

with ſuch well-earned glory, into the camp, to cover yourſelves with the ſhades of night. Let us, quietly, here wait for day." He was obeyed. —As ſoon as it was light, ſending before him a meſſenger to the conſul, the whole camp was in a tumult of joy, and exultation. The teſſera being given, every one went out to meet them; to congratulate thoſe, on their ſafe return, who had undergone ſo much peril for the common ſafety. They called each man, and the whole troop, in general, their preſervers. They gave thanks, and praiſes to the gods. They extol Decius to the ſkies.—Thus did this brave man triumph; proceeding, through the midſt of the camp, with his little troop about

about him,—with every eye upon him,—and in every ſpecies of honour more than rivalling the conſular dignity."

Of this tranſlation, though tolerably exact, the impreſſion is faint. A liberal imitation is, then, the only way left for us. But there is nothing I am acquainted with, in Engliſh hiſtorians, written with this ſpirit, this almoſt graphical minuteneſs. In Gibbon, amidſt all his acknowledged excellencies, there is a languor; partly, cauſed by an ambition of correctneſs, and high finiſhing, and partly, I think, by the want of a competently-vivid imagination, that quickly repels the attention of a reader accuſtomed to the claſſic hiſtorians. If any

one may be allowed ſucceſs in this point, it is the admired Robertſon: more eſpecially in his hiſtory of America;—where, in deſcribing the anxieties, the alternations of hope, and deſpair, in the diſcoverers of unknown regions, much of this ſpirit may be diſcerned.

ON DR. P——, AND HIS DOCTRINES.

Written in the Year 1785.

THE late attack on the very vitals of Chriſtianity, by one who profeſſes himſelf a Diſſenter from the eſtabliſhed Church, muſt, ſurely, have greatly alarmed the more rational and moderate among the ſectaries in general. The danger of introducing the hardy

ſpirit

ſpirit of hypotheſis into religion; the impoſſibility of determining the exact point where ſuch innovations may ſtop, ſhort of abſolute deiſm,—muſt have ſhocked all the well-meaning among them. To deny that our Lord partook of a divine nature muſt ſeem, not only to oppoſe the direct tendency of ſcripture, but alſo to evidence an intention of degrading him, as much as poſſible, to a level with the impoſtor Mahomet.

Plauſible arguments, it is evident from this, and many other inſtances, may be adduced in defence of any poſition, whatever. We have, long ſince, been put into ſome doubt of the very exiſtence of our *bodies*. Our *ſouls* have alſo, of late, ſuſtained a

cruel attack. After this, our faith might ſeem, ſcarcely, an adequate object for the zeal of a reformer to combat. Yet, here, unfortunately, argument has chiefly failed. The weakeſt baſis will, we well know, ſuffice whereon to run up a ſkreen of metaphyſical ſophiſtry. But, here, no baſis, whatever, could be found. Even its moſt ſtrenuous defenders began to think that argument was not totally infallible in things above its reach. Reaſon failing, recourſe was had to the Fathers. Abundance of duſty volumes were handed down from their quiet receſſes; and, by the help of a little ingenious croſs-purpoſe, were made to ſpeak boldly in favour of the new ſyſtem. But here, another unlucky accident befel. Strange as it might

might ſeem, there were certain other people who poſſeſſed the ſame duſty volumes; and, inſtead of having only ſucked here and there, "like an induſtrious bug," merely to ſatisfy the preſent cravings of literary hunger, had abſolutely imbibed and digeſted their vital juices.—By the aſſiſtance of theſe the Fathers again ſpeak their own language, and had the credit of their own ſentiments reſtored to them.

A long and awful ſilence on theſe topics has, ſince, prevailed. By the failure of this reſource, and, as has been hinted, by certain ſage admonitions of his bookſeller, the reforming Doctor has, at laſt, diſcovered that he writes not for the preſent age of prejudice, and bigotry. He, therefore,

appeals to poſterity.—Poſterity will, probably, have much to ſay of Dr. P. After doing juſtice to his ſagacity, and diligence, as a naturaliſt, it will, it is probable, do juſtice likewiſe to his *critical talents*, his *learning*, and his *candour*. It will, poſſibly, repreſent him as man ſmitten with the love of novelty, and change;—ambitious of laying the foundation of a new ſect, not of Chriſtianity, but of abſolute Deiſm. It will ſpeak of him as one deſirous of introducing hypotheſis, now ſo univerſally exploded from ſcience, into religion, where it *can* have nothing to do. Of making the reaſon of man, avowedly ſo weak and ſhort ſighted in all other matters, a judge, and a critic on the deſigns, and revelations of its Creator. Of

obtruding

obtruding his deiſtical doctrines on the public, under the thin veil of *rational chriſtianity*.—All this, it is probable, Poſterity will ſay; and, as time is the never-failing teſt of truth, Poſterity will, probably, be in the right.—But, O Poſterity! forget not to do juſtice, alſo, to his *invincible perſeverance*, his *modeſty*, his *humility*, and *moderation*. Acknowledge him the benefactor of his country; the friend, and encourager of her manufactures,—(the valuable one of paper in the moſt laudable degree,) and the rival of the moſt awakened among the deep-thinkers, the *eſprits forts* of other nations.—Call him not a "fool to fame."—Call him, rather, an open-ſpirited, *philoſophic zany*; who, in imitation of a certain ſect among the

ancients, has endeavoured to divert his fellow-creatures, by ſhewing them that they are a ſet of vile, unthinking, upright machines; which, (as is conſiſtent enough,) are not worthy the care of their Maker, any further than as they may ſerve to evince his power of creating objects of continual ſuffering, and diſguſt, all which it is not in their own power either to foreſee, or prevent:—which *can* do nothing of themſelves, but *muſt* do evil by the decree of their juſt Creator:—and, laſtly, which are introduced into a world of woe, for no other purpoſe that can be conjectured, than merely to complete the predeſtined catalogue of crimes;—to fill up the meaſure of unavoidable calamity.

For

For myſelf:—I love and adhere to the preſent eſtabliſhment, not ſo much from a particular fondneſs for religious ſyſtems, and eſtabliſhments, (which, however they may be blamed by ſome, are perhaps, in ſome degree, neceſſary, in order to prevent our weak memories from forgetting that we are of any religion at all,) as for its ſimplicity, united with a becoming dignity. For its departure preciſely to, what I eſteem, the juſt point from the frippery of her taudry mother, without having ſlid down to the diſguſting nakedneſs of her too-reformed ſiſter. In ſhort;—for preſerving that happy medium between ſuperſtition, and abſolute free-thinking, with which, I ſincerely wiſh, every Church had been content. I reverence it for the

the excellence of its modes of worſhip; the moſt becoming the majeſty of their object of any I am acquainted with.—For its candour, in not having rejected a few harmleſs ceremonies, merely becauſe they belonged to the Romiſh church. For diſtinguiſhing properly between theſe, and more eſſential doctrines; and for its near reſemblance, as far as I am able to judge, to the primitive chriſtian eſtabliſhment. Let us add to theſe recommendations, the number of excellent men it has produced, and is ſtill producing; equal, at leaſt, both in number, and worth, to thoſe of any Church the world has ever known. —Perſevering, as well as I am able, in theſe moderate ideas, neither its bells, its organs, or its ſurplices and hoods

hoods give me any conſcientious diſquiet. I can paſs by a biſhop or a dean with great calmneſs, and, even, reſpect. I am not, at all, offended by his lawn ſleeves, or any other ornament, provided they do not ſeem to have awakened in the wearer thoſe emotions of worldly pride, and arrogance, ſo inconſiſtent with the humble religion of Chriſt. If I diſcover no malignant paſſions, no mean temporizing ſpirit, lurking under theſe trappings, I can eaſily ſeparate the *man* from his *habiliments*; and reverence the former, while I look upon the latter as an inoffenſive mode, employed, ſolely, to give religion, and its profeſſors a proper conſequence in the eyes of the unthinking vulgar.

JUVENILE

JUVENILE EXCURSIONS

IN

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM.

PART II.

ON THE PATHOS OF HOMER, AND THE CHARACTERS OF THE ILIAD.

IT is generally allowed, I believe, that in true pathos, Homer, where he admits it, is ſuperior to all uninſpired writers. Some enquiry into the cauſes of this excellence, ſuch, at leaſt, as have eſcaped the notice of other writers, may not be unacceptable.

I. Homer's

I. Homer's pathos, always, lies chiefly in the idea, or ſentiment itſelf. It has ſeldom, or never, any artificial preparation, or affected language, which in general, tend to defeat the purpoſe they are meant to ſerve. It will, generally, be found to conſiſt of the moſt natural and affecting circumſtances, that the poet can ſupply; frequently familiar, which imparts a ſimplicity of the moſt becoming kind; and is, always, of a ſort nicely adapted to the character of the ſpeaker.—"You could not," ſays Andromache, "when dying, ſtretch forth to us your hand from your couch, nor utter any advice, or conſolation that we might have repeated, in remembrance of you, during the remainder of our ſorrowful days

days and nights." This is at once a ſimple, natural, and highly affecting circumſtance; and, like thoſe of the beſt ſcenes of our own admired dramatiſt, excites at one ſtroke an irreſiſtable ſympathy with the ſufferer, and affords a memorable example of the triumph of nature over the frigidity of art.

The pathos of Priam is of a different kind, but equally in character. He is repreſented ſtruggling with the Trojans, and with difficulty prevented from encountering all the horrors of war without the walls, in order to redeem the body of his ſon, whom he ſees dragged in the duſt by the ſavage Achilles. — "Let me go, my friends," ſays he;—let me go among the

the Greeks, and entreat this outrageous and violent man. Peradventure he may reverence my years, and pity my misfortunes. For he has, himſelf, a father, old like me, who brought him up to be a peſt to this country, and the whole Trojan race."—Here we may obſerve equal nature, and ſimplicity, but ſomewhat more vehemence, and manly dignity. Still more of both theſe latter requiſites are conſpicuous in the noble apoſtrophe of Agamemnon; who, after reproaching the Greeks for their former boaſtings, and their preſent cowardice, thus breaks forth.—" O Jupiter! what monarch didſt thou ever thus, ſuddenly, deprive of all his hard-earned glory, and ſubject to ſuch wretched ruin, and ſlaughter.—But, O Jupiter!

at

at leaſt fulfil this my humble vow. Suffer us now, merely, to eſcape; nor permit the whole Grecian people thus to be exterminated by their enemies." —The well-known apoſtrophe of Ajax, ſo celebrated by Longinus, and admired by every reader, may ſerve as the apex of this ſcale of pathetic exclamation.

But, the great ſuperiority of Homer over all other poets, in the genuine pathetic, ſhines no where brighter than in the ſo much celebrated interview of Hector, and his wife, in the fifth book of the Iliad. The very powerful effect of which ariſes chiefly from, what I deem, a ſecond cauſe of Homer's excellence in this ſpecies of writing:—His, occaſionally, putting

the tendereſt ſentiments in the mouths of perſons of heroic dignity, and fierce demeanour. The wonderful heigthening this imparts to the pathetic is no where better exemplified than in the Othello of Shakeſpear; except it be in this beautiful incident of Homer. The tenderneſs the fierce warrior diſplays towards his little Aſtyanax;—his putting off his helmet, on obſerving the child's alarm at the nodding plumes it was ornamented with;—his ſpeech to Andromache, full of a ſad, yet reſolutely-expreſſed preſentiment of his own approaching fate, and the deſtruction of his native country;—his ſolicitude for his wife's welfare, after his death;—and, laſtly, his prayer for that of his helpleſs infant, are, all, circumſtances highly affecting,

affecting, and, as yet, unequalled, and unimitated by other poets.

A third cauſe of this pre-eminence in the pathos of Homer ſeems nearly allied to the laſt:—The contraſt theſe tender ſcenes receive from the ſurrounding horrors of pitileſs war, and continual ſlaughter.—On this, as it every where occurs, and muſt ſufficiently ſtrike every attentive reader, it would be uſeleſs to dilate.

Virgil has alſo theſe opportunities; but ſeldom makes the like powerful uſe of them. His pathos is very much the effect of art, and is greatly enforced, if not often, entirely, created, by the ſweet, flowing, pathetic caſt his general diction. It will ſeem

no ſmall preſumption to cenſure a poet of ſuch celebrity, without ſome proof of this defect. Let me venture to give one, which may ſerve for all; —where Anna, in the very extremity of her grief, on beholding her ſiſter in her laſt agonies, is made to exclaim, with the air of an orator who is looking around him for ſomething to excite the commiſeration of his audience;—"Quid primum, deſerta querar?"—What ſhall I, thus deſerted, firſt begin to lament?—How different this from the unaffected effuſions of nature in Homer; and how well will it confirm the truth of the above remark, to thoſe who can diſtinguiſh well-concealed art, from undiſguiſed nature!

With reſpect to Homer's *characters*, they have a vivid force that none of his ſucceſſors have been at all able to emulate. Our Milton, evidently, from the nature of his plan, and the very ſmall number of human characters it would admit; and Virgil, I ſuppoſe, from as evident an inferiority of genius, which would be ſtill more conſpicuous, were it not for his beautifully-finiſhed, and nicely-adapted language. The characters of the former, have, however, been ſometimes, injudiciouſly, compared with thoſe of his illuſtrious predeceſſor. But, for ſuch, Milton had no examplar in writing. Of courſe all their ſentiments, except the few that could be gleaned from holy writ, are new, and invented, ſolely, for them. To

compare them with Homer's deities, who mix in battle with more than human animoſity, and rail at each other with more than vulgar vehemence, were a waſte of time. In reading the poems of Homer and Virgil, we are frequently obliged to put on a temporary compliance with the prejudices of the poet, and of the age in which he lived. It is neceſſary to follow them to their wars, with all the intereſt we can excite in ourſelves for their little contentions of a day. We muſt exult with them over a fallen enemy, and continually allow an importance to events which it is difficult for a philoſophic mind to admire. In Milton, no ſuch compliance is neceſſary. The principal characters, in him, are of a kind that all muſt

muſt venerate. The incidents are ſuch as muſt equally intereſt the chriſtian, philoſopher, and the man. The very human perſonages are of a ſuperior claſs. They have, as yet, imbibed none of the little prejudices that have ſince adhered to their deſcendants. Their ideas are general, and of a dignified ſimplicity:—ſuch as beſt become the progenitors of mankind, while in a ſtate of innocence, and purity.

Reading Homer, with theſe reaſonable allowances, we ſhall find his mere human characters above all competition, and above all praiſe. They ſeem, frequently, to break through the "calm inſpiration" of the poet into all the pathos, and vehemence of

the moſt impaſſioned drama.—— "Others, ſtill, are ſuffered to retain their ſpoils," cries the enraged Achilles, "from me, only, has he raviſhed the reward of all my toils;—the beloved maid in whom I found ſuch delight.—Why have the Greeks attacked this city?—Wherefore has Atrides collected ſo immenſe a force?—Is it not for the ſake of Helen?—Do then the ſons of Atreus, alone of all men, love their wives?"—By ſtrokes of nature like this, which are ſparingly admitted by other poets, but copiouſly by Homer, the epic adds, to its dignity, the excellencies of the drama. His characters ſeem every where naturally to develop themſelves, almoſt without the aſſiſtance of the poet, and harangue, not like orators, but real perſonages.

perſonages. Even their wanderings and abruptneſs, which Pope * has ſometimes (perhaps judiciouſly enough,) connected, and ſmoothed down, have their effect on a lover of ſimplicity; and on one who willingly contemplates the remote unpoliſhed age in which the poet wrote. No ſucceeding author ſeems to have poſſeſſed any comparable ſhare of that ενθυσιαστικον, και σφοδρον παθος; —— that vehemence of mind, and fervour of affections, which, enabled Homer to mix with ſuch peculiar warmth in all the actions, paſſions, and ſentiments of his heroes.

ON

* I chuſe to give a proſe tranſlation of theſe paſſages, rather than Pope's elegant verſion:—Since, whatever Pope has preſerved, he has undoubtedly loſt the greateſt characteriſtic of this poet,—ſimplicity.

ON SOME REMARKABLE PASSAGES IN THE PARADISE LOST OF MILTON.

SOME obſervations on a few of the moſt remarkable paſſages in the Paradiſe Loſt may, not only, amuſe, but afford opportunity for minuter criticiſm; which, in certain inſtances, is not without its uſe.

Milton may be ſaid to have interwoven his whole creed, theological, philoſophical, and moral, into this great work. Of the former I ſhall ſay little, but that his doctrines are, entirely, conſonant with, and often cloſely copied from, the holy writings. As theſe, in ſpeaking of the Deity,

Deity *, have, for evident reaſon conformed, as much as poſſible, t the limited conceptions of man, ſo, likewiſe, has Milton been content to inveſt him on moſt occaſions with the properties of humanity. What, in fact, can a *man* deſcribe but the effects of *human* paſſions, or even conceive but *human* ideas?—If, moreover, as we are inſtructed, man was created in the image of God, the propriety of aſcribing to the Deity a more exalted ſpecies of humanity is incontrovertible.—If it be aſked,—Why Milton,

* Both the Prophets, and the Pſalmiſt repreſent the Supreme Being, as angry;—as pleaſed;—as taking vengeance on his foes, and exulting in their overthrow.

ſilton choſe to exhibit the Supreme ɔeing, at all; or why he did not for ıis ſentiments adopt that comprehenſive and ſublime kind of brevity, of which the Scriptures have given ſo excellent an example?—the anſwer would, I confeſs, be more difficult to find.

Milton's ideas of *ſpirituality* might appear very ſingular, if the following remarkable paſſage could be ſuppoſed to convey his *real* ideas on the ſubject. But the *poet* is doubtleſs obliged to inveſt ſpirit with a body, as occaſion ſerves. His angels are, (as has been obſerved,) ſometimes ſpirit, and ſometimes matter. But one thing may be noticed in honour

of

of his conſiſtency, which, I believe, has not before been mentioned, that no paſſage can be adduced to prove that he has aſcribed to them the properties of both, in one and the ſame action. Of this impropriety inſtances are not uncommon in ſome other poets. If it be allowable for a writer, to inveſt ſpirituality with a material body, at all, it, certainly, is equally ſo, for him to vary theſe ſo as beſt to ſuit his purpoſe. As in heaven, it were abſurd to introduce matter, (which, however, Milton has unhappily done in his battle of angels, which is, indeed, "wild work in heaven,") ſo without it on earth, all imagery, and, almoſt, every other poetical requiſite would entirely have been loſt.

——— "So

——— "So down they ſat,
And to their viands *fell* *;
nor ſeemingly
The angel, nor in miſt, the common gloſs
Of Theologians; but with keen diſpatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To tranſubſtantiate: what redounds, tranſpires
Through ſpirits with eaſe; nor wonder; if by fire
Of ſooty coal th' empiric alchemiſt
Can turn, or holds it poſſible to turn,
Metals of droſſieſt ore to perfect gold
As from the mine."— B. v. 433.

The illuſtration of the alchemiſt, with which this paſſage ends, is, if rigorouſly examined, liable to an objection.

* It is curious to obſerve, that while Milton is borrowing words from other languages, ſome of which, as "*debell*," &c. have never been adopted by other writers, he, in certain inſtances, compenſates his native tongue, by adopting its very loweſt idioms.

jection. It is not by *tranſubſtantiation* that animal digeſtion is performed; which, by the terms, "*real* hunger, and concoctive heat," the poet, evidently, has in his eye; but by *decompoſition*, and *gradual aſſimilation*. The chemiſts pretended it was abſolute *tranſmutation*, or change of ſubſtance, which produced gold from inferior metals. But the reſemblance is perfect enough to ſerve the purpoſes of a poet, whoſe alluſions are, oftener, intended to amuſe than to illuſtrate.

The Paradiſe Loſt exhibits the philoſophic opinions, likewiſe, of its author, as well as his ideas on almoſt every ſpecies of human learning. The famous ſpeech of Raphael, in the

eighth

eighth book, not only contains a very proper reproof of the vain curioſity of man, ever ſtriving at things beyond its reach, and neglecting thoſe of real uſe; (which, by the way, comes oddly, enough, from our author,) but, alſo, a kind of prophetic ſurvey of the various aſtronomic ſyſtems that have ſucceeded, and are ſtill ſucceeding each other. The angel, then, ſeems to ſlide, in a very beautiful and majeſtic manner, into a curſory view of the Copernican ſyſtem, in ſome lines that can, hardly, be excelled. Their expreſſions relating to the heavenly bodies, and their ſtill ſolemn motion through infinite ſpace, crowd, at once, the mind with all the grandeur, and ſublimity of aſtronomic ſpeculation.

——— "What

——— "What if the ſun
Be centre to the world, and other ſtars
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wandering courſe now high, now low, then hid,
Progreſſive, retrograde, or ſtanding ſtill,
In ſix thou ſeeſt, and what if ſeventh to theſe
The planet earth, ſo ſtedfaſt though ſhe ſeem,
Inſenſibly three different motions move?—
But whether thus theſe things, or whether not,
Whether the ſun predominant in heaven
Riſe on the earth, or earth riſe on the ſun,
He from the eaſt his flaming courſe begin,
Or ſhe from weſt her ſilent courſe advance
With inoffenſive pace that ſpinning ſleeps
On her ſoft axle, while ſhe paces even,
And bears thee ſafe with the ſmooth air along,
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,
Leave them to God above, him ſerve and fear."
B. viii. 122.

Adam's account of dreams has been, juſtly, eſteemed too refined for

a newly-created being. The ſame cenſure will fall on part of that noble morning hymn, in which the poet has united all the graces of poetry in praiſe of his Creator, with a ſucceſs peculiar to, and worthy of, Milton. The following lines even approach to the pedantic.

" " Air, and ye elements, the eldeſt birth
Of nature's womb, that in *quaternion* run
Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix
And nouriſh all things; let your ceaſeleſs change
Vary to our great Maker ſtill new praiſe."

This invocation of the elements, and, afterwards, of the miſts, and exhalations, in all the phraſe of a naturaliſt; before man had been long enough in exiſtence to obſerve their motions, or diſcover their uſes, brings the poet too

too much forward into view. Theſe are, however, ſlight blemiſhes; and, perhaps, add, in dignity, more than they detract, in ſtrict propriety.

The following excellent paſſage, which ſhould have been noticed among the firſt, both for its ſubject, and its dignity, had, almoſt, eſcaped my obſervation.

" O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not deprav'd from good, created all
Such to perfection, one firſt matter all,
Indued with various forms, various degrees
Of ſubſtance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more ſpirituous, and pure,
As nearer to him plac'd or nearer tending
Each in their ſeveral active ſpheres aſſign'd,
Till body up to ſpirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root

Springs lighter the green ſtalk, from thence the leaves
More aery; laſt the bright conſummate flower
Spirits odorous breaths." B. v. 469.

This ſeems rational theology, illuſtrated, and adorned by genuine poetry. The ſimile is, in the higheſt degree, apt and beautiful. Modern philoſophers who *may* object to the former, *muſt* be pleaſed with the latter. What follows is more obſcure, and leſs rational.

Amid this copious diſplay of learning, there are ſome paſſages that ſavour more of a whimſical imagination, than of genuine ſcience. They are worthy of notice, only, as odd phænomena among regular, and uſeful luminaries. Speaking of the neceſſity

ceſſity of aliment to ſpiritual ſubſtance, which he obſerves (in the perſon of Raphael,) retains all the inferior faculties of body, he ſays what is, in part, true:—

——— "Of elements,
The groſſer feeds the purer, earth the ſea,
Earth and the ſea feed air, the air thoſe fires
Ethereal, and as loweſt firſt the moon;
Whence in her viſage round thoſe ſpots, unpurged
Vapors not yet into her ſubſtance turn'd."
B. v. 415.

The author had been, before, ſpeaking of the "moon whoſe orb, through optic glaſs, the Tuſcan artiſt views to deſcry new lands, rivers, or mountains in her *ſpotty* globe." He, now, chuſes to account for theſe ſpots in another manner.—But the worſt is yet to

come. The ſun, alſo, requires his alimental recompence, and, as the poet tells us, in terms not leſs unpoetical, than unphiloſophical:—

——— "At even
Sups with the ocean."

Though, as I have before obſerved, a confuſion of matter, and ſpirit may be allowed to a poet, who, occaſionally, treats of things "beyond the viſible diurnal ſphere;" yet, by a ſtrict attention to philoſophic probability in other reſpects, no opportunities of *poetry* could be loſt, and much *intereſt* might be gained. The two lines that follow are very remarkable for an attention to aſtronomic truth, in the firſt of them, and for a moſt ſingular deviation from it, in the latter.

"Now

" Now had night meaſured with her *ſhadowy*
cone
Half way *up hill** this vaſt ſublunar vault."

Here the " ſhadowy cone" is as conformable both to aſtronomy and poetry, as the—" half way up hill," if it has *any* meaning, is diſcordant to both.

Unhappily, Milton often falls into this error of degrading philoſophy by ſome inconſiſtent alluſion. This is the fate of the following noble idea, worthy, in itſelf, of the greateſt philoſopher, as well as greateſt poet.

" Some ſay he bid his angels turn aſcanſe
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more

* It is very ſingular that Bentley, who has fallen foul on ſome of the fineſt paſſages in the Paradiſe Loſt, approves of, and juſtifies this expreſſion.

From the ſun's axle; they with labour puſh'd
Oblique the centric globe:—
—Elſe had the ſpring
Perpetual ſmil'd on earth with vernant flowers,
Equal in day and nights, except to thoſe
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted ſhone." B. x. 668.

It ſeems extremely probable from the poſition of the other planets, and from other reaſons that might be adduced, that the earth has undergone ſuch a revolution; and what cauſe could a *poet* find more worthy of ſuch change than what Milton here aſſigns! It is certain, alſo, that in a parallel poſition of the earth's axis to that of the ſun, more countries would become habitable *: for, even the poles, by the

* Dr. Keil, in anſwer to Burnet, has (not *convincingly*, I think,) proved the contrary. But

the well-known law of refraction, being perpetually enlightened, the continuance of the ſun's heat would, in great meaſure, compenſate for the obliquity of his rays. In this reſpect, as well as in ſome others, Jupiter, as has been often remarked, ſeems the uncurſed, unfallen planet.

But it is the fate of this noble idea to be, like moſt other human excellencies, ſomewhat obſcured by its reverſe.

But why ſhould we ſuppoſe Jupiter, ſo much the nobleſt of the planets, has not his axis in the beſt direction poſſible?—And does it not follow, from this hypotheſis, that the planets nearer to the ſun than the earth is, ought to have their axes ſtill *more* oblique? Which is not likely; nor has, *yet*, appeared, from obſervation, to be the fact.

verſe. It is not the unneceſſary diſplay of learning, in the enumeration of the countries about the ſouth pole, that ſo much offends. This might be allowed to the digreſſive copiouſneſs of the epic. But after accounting, thus naturally, for the ſun's deviation from the direct path of the equator, and ſhewing that the motion which cauſed this deviation proceeded, not from the ſun, but from the earth, the repreſenting that luminary as turning aſide with horror from Adam's offence, as from the "Thyeſtean banquet," is a little incongruous and puerile.

Many other inſtances of ſimilar impropriety, (which, I am, however, well aware all readers will not allow

to

to be ſuch,) might be found in Milton; were it pleaſing to hunt after faults of ſo little importance to a poetical work, among beauties of ſo much greater magnitude. The reader who willingly ſtays to contemplate ſuch, in a work of this ſtamp, reſembles a pretended connoiſſeur, who is not content with the effect of a fine picture viewed at it's proper diſtance, but, by approaching too near, converts it into an unpleaſing diſplay of petty errors, and partial diſproportions.—I will, now, advert to a few ſtriking beauties of a characteriſtic excellence, which have not been, particularly, noticed elſewhere.

The "natural ſort of Milton is," as Johnſon obſerves, "gigantic loftineſs."

neſs." A ſort of more than mortal ſublimity. This runs through all his works, and tinctures all his deſcriptions. Even his tractate of education, the plan of which, evidently, tends rather to produce heroes, and great men, than peaceful and obedient citizens, evinces this. But this ſublimity is, wonderfully, varied. I will produce two or three characteriſtic ſpecimens of its varieties. The firſt, of the moſt dreadful ſort; and ſuch as would have entered no human imagination, without the aid of the inſpired writings.

" At once the Four ſpread out their ſtarry wings
With dreadful ſhade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the ſound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous hoſt.
He on his impious foe right onward drove,
Gloomy

* Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The ſtedfaſt empyréan ſhook throughout,
All but the throne itſelf of God. Full ſoon
Among them he arrived, in his right hand
Graſping ten thouſand thunders, which he ſent
Before him, ſuch as in their ſouls infix'd
Plagues; they aſtoniſhed all reſiſtance loſt
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
O'er ſhields and helms and helmed heads he rode
Of thrones and mighty ſeraphim proſtrate
That wiſh'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them as a ſhelter from his ire."

B. vi. 827.

The next equally ſublime, but ſoftened by a ſort of awful beauty.

——— "Up he rode
Followed with acclamation and the ſound
Symphonious of ten thouſand harps that tun'd
Angelic

* νυκλι εοικως. Homer.

Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air
Reſounded, *(thou remember'ſt, for thou heard'ſt)*
The heavens and all the conſtellations ſung,
The planets in their ſtation liſt'ning ſtood,
While the bright pomp aſcended jubilant."
B. vii. 557.

Here the appeal to Adam, "thou remember'ſt, for thou heard'ſt," ſeizes on the reader's imagination, in a ſingular manner; and greatly adds to the intereſt, as well as the ſolemnity of the ſcene.

The following lines, though, certainly, of the *dreadfully* ſublime ſpecies, are quoted chiefly to ſhew that a "metaphor, or epithet drawn from art" does *not, always,* "degrade nature:"—an obſervation made by Dr. Johnſon in his life of Gray.

——"The

——— "The thicken'd ſky
Like a dark *ceiling** ſtood."

The word *ceiling* ſuggeſts nothing debaſing to the imagery, but, rather, an idea of *cloſeneſs*, and *confinement*, that adds, greatly, to the terror of the deſcription. Again:

——— "The thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aereal *hall*."

Milton's pathos does not ſeem to me of the higher kind. It is, however,

* The note of Richardſon on this paſſage is ridiculous enough. "Ceiling may be thought too mean a word in poetry, but Milton had a view to its derivation from Cœlum, (Latin) Cielo, (Italian) Heaven." It is very unlikely Milton had any ſuch view. It is enough to ſay in defence of this, and other paſſages of the kind, that the *preciſion* they give to idea often more than compenſates for their *meanneſs*.

ever, ſuch as, perhaps, better ſuits his ſubject than that of a more tender kind. Of the graceful ſimplicity of Homer, in his pathetic touches, he diſcovers little. But it ſhould be remembered, that he has fewer opportunities for it than moſt other poets. The ſituation, and circumſtances of Adam, ſcarce, afforded any. Eve, yet childleſs, wanted one of the moſt touching occaſions for it. The reſt of his characters are far ſuperior to it. He has, however, contrived to produce ſcenes of a very affecting, though more laboured, and, if I may term it ſo, oratorical kind of pathetic. It is always nicely ſuited to the character of the ſpeaker.

His talent for natural deſcription ſhines,

ſhines, chiefly, I think, in his many pictureſque ſimiles. His long and laboured deſcriptions of paradiſe have, as has been obſerved, "little of the freſhneſs of nature in them." On looking over his ſimiles, I was ſomewhat ſurpriſed to meet with one, in the tenth book, that ſeems leſs neceſſary, and worſe adapted to his ſubject, than any I have met with in poetry. I mean that, where he compares the vacuity left in hell by the incurſions of the evil angels on earth, to the waſte left by the retreat of the Tartars from their Ruſſian foes*. The image required no illuſtration; and there is an evident *affectation* of reading in the attempt to furniſh one.

* Book x. 431.

ON SOME DIFFICULTIES IN THE PARADISE LOST.

THE paſſages of this poem that are of difficult interpretation, are not numerous; and ſeem to ariſe, either from negligence, unuſual mode of expreſſion, ambiguity of conſtruction, or, moſt frequently of all, from wrong punctuation. Some few, however, may be met with which have an obſcurity adhering to them, independently of any of the above cauſes. I mean to offer ſome explanatory remarks on each of theſe heads: more, as will eaſily be ſeen, to render the Paradiſe Loſt intelligible to the common reader, than with any idle ambition of dictating to the well-informed.

The

The two difficulties I ſhall firſt comment on are examples of the former ſpecies;—incorrectneſs owing, probably, to negligence in the author. Though not ſtrictly conformable to the uſual modes of ſpeech, they may, doubtleſs, be eaſily underſtood in their preſent ſtate. There are, however, few readers whoſe progreſs is not ſtopped, and their attention, for a time, diverted from more important objects, by a ſort of an abrupt inaccuracy obſervable in them.

——— "But follow me,
And I will bring thee where no ſhadow ſtays
Thy coming, and thy ſoft embraces, *he*
Whoſe image thou art." B. iv. 469.

It is evident the conjunction *but* is *underſtood* in the third line. By *ſup-*

plying it, and making the preceding word *ſingular*, much clearneſs is gained, and nothing, in point of metre, loſt.

——— "I will bring thee where no ſhadow ſtays
Thy coming, and thy ſoft *embrace*, *but he*
Whoſe image thou art."

The other paſſage is ſomewhat of the ſame kind:—

——— "*So* roſe the Danite ſtrong
Herculean Samſon from the harlot lap
Of Philiſtéan Dalilah, and waked
Shorn of his ſtrength, *they* deſtitute and bare
Of all their virtue." B. ix. 1059.

Here I venture to ſubſtitute *as* for *ſo*, at the beginning of the ſentence; —in the fourth line, *thus* for *they*;— and, in the laſt, *they of*, inſtead of *of all*:

all :—a ſlight innovation ; but by no means ſlight in its effect on this, otherwiſe, oddly-conſtructed ſimile.

The next paſſage I ſhall produce ſeems, alſo, an effect of the negligence of a mind teeming with noble images, and not always attentive to the mode of expreſſing them in language. Though little or nothing is wanting to its being underſtood, even in its preſent ſtate, by the moſt careleſs reader, yet there is, evidently, ſomething defective in point of ſyntax and grammar.

" Brighteſt Seraph, tell
In which of all theſe ſhining orbs hath man
His fixed ſeat, or fixed ſeat hath none,
But *all* theſe ſhining orbs his choice to dwell."
B. iii. 667.

The meaning of this laſt line is, plainly, *but he hath his choice, which to dwell in, of all theſe ſhining orbs.* The line, then, wants the prepoſition *in*; which cannot, well, be underſtood. Even when that is ſupplied, the word *all* is an inaccuracy: but cannot be remedied, without ſo much circumlocution, as would make a ſtrange innovation in the text. I will not, therefore, preſume to offer any emendation.

There is, it may be here obſerved, a general negligence running throughout Homer, but it is of a very different kind. In Milton, it often looks like inadvertency, through ſome temporary remiſſion of mind. In Homer, it

it ſeems like that neglect of *minute* parts which ariſes from a comprehenſive attention to the effect of the *whole*; and from a high degree of poetic fervour, and enthuſiaſm. It, ſometimes, at once, poſſeſſes the effect, both of negligence, and ſimplicity. I will venture to produce an inſtance of it, which may ſerve as a characteriſtic trait of the diction of the Iliad. His negligence of minutiæ appears in applying the ſame form of expreſſion, to objects ſo greatly differing: his ſimplicity no words are competent to point out. After ſaying in many parts of his poem, where the battle rages with the utmoſt violence,

——— "πολυς δ' ορυμαγδος ορωρει."

In the very beautiful deſcription of

the ſhield, as a circumſtance that attends a marriage,—he ſays—

——— "πολυς δ' υμεναιος ορωρει."

Such ſubtle graces of diction (for ſuch I think this,) muſt be loſt in the beſt tranſlation. Look not, therefore, in Pope for this. You will not find it; but you may conſole yourſelf for the loſs, by many modern graces of ſpeech, and much high colouring, and refinement that poor Homer never thought of.

Some correction might render the paſſage that ſucceeds more clear, with much leſs alteration from its preſent ſtate. It may, poſſibly, owe its origin to a deſire of conforming to the idiom of another language. But

But as this is an Engliſh poem, and of courſe muſt meet with many *mere* Engliſh readers, a wiſh to make the whole intelligible to ſuch will not, it is probable, be ill taken.

——— " Yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied." B. iv. 373.

The ſenſe of this laſt expreſſion is, apparently, *though I meet with no pity myſelf*; or, with, I think, leſs probability, *though I did not pity you before.* I ſhould chuſe the former interpretation; and by ſubſtituting *myſelf* to *though I*, and reading the whole as in the ablative abſolute, *myſelf unpitied*, all obſcurity would be removed.

A diffi-

A difficulty of much greater import is cauſed in the following lines by, what ought, probably, to be aſcribed to the negligence of tranſcribers, rather than to that of Milton himſelf. A very ſlight and allowable alteration of one monoſyllable for another will make every thing plain and intelligible.—The preſent reading ſtands thus:

——— "If they [*produced*] all things, who inclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoſo eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wiſdom without their leave?" B. ix. 722.

Inſtead of the conjunction *that*, in the third of theſe lines, I ſhould ſubſtitute the word *then*, and take away the note of interrogation. This alteration is, in part, juſtified by the ſubſequent

ſubſequent paſſage; and ſeems highly conformable to the character of the ſpeaker, and the general tenor of the reaſoning. The ſerpent is endeavouring to inſtil into the mind of Eve, as the beſt preparative to diſobedience, high notions of her own dignity, and importance: and, at the ſame time, diſparages, as much as poſſible, the wiſdom and goodneſs of the Supreme Being, whoſe power, in creating all things, he, alſo, calls in queſtion. If he *did* create all things, (he continues in the ſame ſtrain,) and incloſed wiſdom, and knowledge within this tree, then he who eats of this fruit, attains both wiſdom, and knowledge by his own reſolution, and proweſs, in deſpite of it's maker; who hath, enviouſly, forbid them to all but himſelf.

" And

"And wherein lies the offence?"— This is the beſt ſolution I can find of this difficult paſſage, though others, doubtleſs, might be found of nearly equal plauſibility.

A difficulty, of no leſs account, is obſervable in the next paſſage I ſhall comment on. It is as obſcure as any thing in the whole poem. I will not attempt any emendation where there is, probably, no incorrectneſs. It ſeems to me a paſſage replete with a meaning difficult to be expreſſed, in few words, by any phraſe, here expreſſed by a very obſcure and imperfect one.

"Eve, now I ſee thou art exact of taſte,
And elegant, of ſapience no ſmall part,
Since to each *meaning ſavour we apply*,
And *palate* call *judicious*." B. ix. 1017.

The

The analogy between the ſenſe of taſting peculiar to the palate, and the judicial faculties of the mind; or, rather, thoſe inſtantaneous, and almoſt intuitive deciſions of it, when applied to works of imagination, is, here, the object of the poet. Adam praiſes Eve for her judgment in recommending a fruit ſo grateful to the palate. To dignify his commendation, he allows it to be a part of real wiſdom, thus nicely to diſtinguiſh; which he proves, not very ſolidly, but analogically enough, from the cuſtom* of applying the properties of the different ſavours that affect the palate, to the various ſentiments that affect the mind,

* Here likewiſe, the *poet*, ſteps from behind the curtain.

mind, or underſtanding; and, from our calling a palate eaſily made ſenſible of theſe various taſtes, a *judicious* one. All this is, certainly, too refined for a being newly brought into exiſtence, even ſuppoſing him endued with all the ſuperiority of mind and body the poet, elſewhere, aſcribes to him; but this is, evidently, the ſcope of the poet. It is remarkable enough that this metaphorical tranſpoſition of terms obtains in almoſt every language *; and it is more than probable that the word *ſapience*, and the idea of

* The reader will find conſiderable amuſement and indeed no bad illuſtration of this paſſage, in the opening of Voltaire's celebrated Eſſay on Taſte, where the analogy is well inveſtigated. The annotators on Milton ſay little

of its derivation, ſtruck the author's mind ſo forcibly, as to ſuggeſt, originally, the paſſage here explained.

One more trivial emendation, or rather reſtoration, of the text I will propoſe; which ſeems, notwithſtanding the authority of great names, highly proper and warrantable. In the tenth book of the Paradiſe Loſt the poet ſays of Eve after her tranſgreſſion, in the firſt editions:—

"To him ſhe haſted; in her face excuſe
Came prologue, and apology *to* prompt,
B. ix. 853.

Fenton

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little about it. Dr. Newton only explains "Since we uſe the word *favor* in both ſenſes, and apply it to the underſtanding, as well as to the palate." This is juſt enough to hint the meaning to an intelligent reader, but can convey little information to the common one.

Fenton firſt, and after him Doctors Bentley and Newton, ſuppoſe the *to*, in the ſecond line, an error of the preſs. They propoſe, and have admitted into the text, *too* inſtead of it. I think the original reading right. The whole idea is taken from the Drama. "In her face Excuſe" (perſonified) "came" [as] "prologue," (ſpeaker of the prologue,) "and Apology," (alſo perſonified,) "to prompt," (or as prompter.) There may be leſs dignity, but there is evidently more conſiſtency in the original reading; which, moreover, *as original*, ought not lightly to be conjectured away. The paſſage ſhould ſtand thus:

To him ſhe haſted; in her face, Excuſe
Came, prologue, and Apology, to prompt;

Beſides

Beſides inadvertencies, much confuſion is cauſed in many parts of this great poem, by wrong punctuation. The whole ſyſtem of pointing, of late ſo much improved, ſeems conducted on falſe principles throughout. The period ought, certainly, to have been much oftener admitted, in the room of the colon or ſemicolon. This added to the native diffuſeneſs of Milton, which, otherwiſe, it might in ſome degree have amended, makes the ſenſe of many paſſages almoſt inextricable.—For example:

" But for thee
I had perſiſted happy, had not thy pride
And wand'ring vanity, when leaſt was ſafe
Rejected my forewarning, and diſdained
Not to be truſted, longing to be ſeen
Though by the Devil himſelf, him overweening

To over-reach, but with the ſerpent meeting
Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee,
To truſt thee from my ſide, imagin'd wiſe,
Conſtant, mature, proof againſt all aſſaults,
And underſtood not all was but a ſhow
Rather than ſolid virtue, all but a rib
Crooked* by nature, bent, as now appears
More to the part ſiniſter, from me drawn,
Well if thrown out, as ſupernumerary,
To my juſt number found." B. x. 873.

Let us now ſee if the reader's attention might not be conſiderably relieved, in the courſe of this long ſentence, and, at the ſame time, much clearneſs gained by a different mode of pointing.

" But for thee
I had perſiſted happy. Had not thy pride
And

* It is impoſſible here not to notice the unbecoming ſort of quibble made by Adam on the words *crooked*, and *ſiniſter*.

And wand'ring vanity, when leaſt was ſafe,
Rejected my fore-warning, and diſdain'd
Not to be truſted; longing to be ſeen
Though by the Devil himſelf:—Him over-
weening
To over-reach; but, with the ſerpent meeting,
Fool'd and beguil'd:—by him thou, I by
thee,
To truſt thee from my ſide, imagin'd wiſe,
Conſtant, mature, proof againſt all aſſaults;
And underſtood not all was but a ſhow
Rather than ſolid virtue:—all but a rib
Crooked by nature; bent, as now appears,
More to the part ſiniſter:—from me drawn,
(Well if thrown out,) as ſupernumerary
To my juſt number found."

But this is, by no means, one of the moſt confuſed paſſages, either through diffuſeneſs, or wrong punctuation. The following is much more ſo, on both accounts. It is a remarkable example of Milton's odd talent

of heaping ſentence upon ſentence, and parentheſis on parentheſis, 'till he ſometimes forgets from whence he ſets out. It is ſingular enough that the opening of this ſpeech "If thou beeſt he," and what immediately follows has no ſort of reference to, or connexion with, any ſubſequent part of the ſentence; or, even, of the whole ſpeech.

"If thou beeſt he*; but O how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy realms of light
Cloth'd with tranſcendant brightneſs didſt outſhine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counſels, equal hope
And

* Richardſon's note on this ſpeech, ſeems, as is uſual with him, much more ſpecious than ſolid.

And hazard in the glorious enterprize,
Join'd with me once, now miſery hath join'd
In equal ruin: into what pit thou ſeeſt
From what heighth fall'n, ſo much the ſtrong-
er prov'd
He with his thunder: and 'till then who knew
The force of thoſe dire arms? yet not for
thoſe,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can elſe inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward luſtre, that fix'd
mind,
And high diſdain from ſenſe of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightieſt rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of ſpirits arm'd,
That durſt diſlike his reign,—&c. B. i. 84.

This is a very bundle of parentheſes; and, for clearneſs ſake, ought ſo to be diſtinguiſhed. This over-copiouſneſs in Milton, though often burdenſome to a reader, muſt be attributed to a

mind of the utmoſt clearneſs and comprehenſion, that ſaw every object in every poſſible light, and accompanied by every ſecondary idea at all connected with it. It is ſo blended with his characteriſtic beauties as, like the ſublimity of Michael Angelo, to be inſeparable from ſome degree of extravagance, and diſguſt. By his weariſome length of period he looſens the chain of fancy, and gives room for the moſt glowing and magnificent ſcenery that poetry can admit.—But this is a field in which a critic may eaſily loſe himſelf. I will content myſelf with giving two or three more inſtances, of leſs account, in which the ſenſe might be greatly aſſiſted by a different punctuation, and then have done.

" What

" What beſides
Of ſorrow and dejection and deſpair
Our frailty can ſuſtain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our ſweet
Receſs, and only conſolation left
Familiar to our *eyes*, *all* places elſe
Inhoſpitable appear,"—&c. B. xi. 300.

Here, by admitting only a comma after the word *eyes*, two totally diſjunct ſentences are run together. It ſhould have been, at leaſt, a colon, according to the ſyſtem adopted in pointing the Paradiſe Loſt, but a full ſtop in a more regular method.

" Pouring forth more ſweet
Wild above rule or art; enormous bliſs."
B. v. 296.

In theſe lines a contrary defect is obſervable. A comma, only, ſhould

have been uſed after the word *art*. This emendation, indeed, Dr. Newton ſuggeſts, at the end of his note on this paſſage.

The commentators on Milton find the following lines obſcure and ungrammatical. They are, in fact, rather perplexed, but might be much improved by different pointing.

> " For none ſure will clame in hell
> Precedence, none, whoſe portion is ſo ſmall
> Of preſent pain, *that* with ambitious mind
> *Will* covet more." B. ii. 32.

There ſhould be a ſemicolon after *precedence*. The ſenſe, then, will be: *—there is no one whoſe portion of preſent pain is ſo ſmall, as, with ambitious mind, to covet more.* It will be a much

much greater improvement ſtill, were it allowed us to change *that*, in the third line, for *as*; and *will*, in the laſt, for *to*.

——— "For ſo the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; *doubtleſs;* while we dream,
And know not,"—&c. B. ii. 313.

Of this difficulty no notice has been taken. It may, I think, be, tolerably well, removed by taking away the ſemicolon before *doubtleſs*, and thus connecting it with the former part of the line. In which caſe, *doubtleſs* which is, at preſent, ſo exceeding *doubtful*, will have pretty much the ſame ſignification as the old word *forſooth*; and a particular emphaſis will be thrown upon the word *growing*.

Infinite

Infinite other errors of this kind might be found: but theſe few will ſuffice, to ſhew the expediency of a more correct edition of a poem, that cannot be, too much, held up to the notice, and admiration of mankind.

MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON EPIC POETRY, IN GENERAL.

No human invention appears more perfect or admirable than the conſtruction of an Epic Poem. This is moſt ſtrikingly evident, if we conſider ſuch a production, independently of all poetical ornament, merely as a portion of hiſtory; the main ſubject of which is preſented to our view in its full amplitude, while the events anterior

anterior and ſubſequent, but ſo connected as to render them more or leſs intereſting, are announced in the ſummary mode of epiſodical digreſſion. Although, for many and obvious reaſons, ſuch a plan could never be adopted in general hiſtory, it has proved, in numerous inſtances, the moſt perfect mode of treating the events of any remarkable period that the art of man could deviſe. So excellent, indeed, is it, that in an Epic poem founded on real but remote events, we, always, with ſome reluctance, allow to the requiſite poetical ornaments the ungrateful prerogative of detracting from truth.

The drama ſeems indebted to the Epic for its entire ſtructure. Ariſtotle, indeed,

indeed, tells us tragedy was originally derived from Dithyrambic ſong. It would be ſtrange preſumption to differ from Ariſtotle, but may we not venture to ſuſpect, that whatever the Drama may, in other reſpects, owe to the antient Dithyrambic, it borrowed its form and ſtructure, entirely, from the poems of Homer; which were anterior to, and, in fact, ſeem the parents of *all* other poetry. The Drama is, indeed, the Epic in miniature, though, in a manner realized by action.—Ariſtotle contends, alſo, for its ſuperior excellence to the Epic. But in what, except in actual repreſentation, does this ſuperior excellence conſiſt? "It *might* adopt its metre," he tells us: but it were, perhaps, better it *did* not.—"It admits

muſic,

muſic, and *decoration*."—After diſtinguiſhing properly, as he does in the beginning of this chapter, between *real* and *popular* excellence, it is rather wonderful he ſhould mention theſe as turning the ſcale in favour of the Drama: for, although they may ſerve to heighten illuſion, and, thus, give a *popular* ſuperiority, they are, certainly, no more than adſcititious and accidental advantages*.

An Epic poem, according to the French critics, (who have ever been improving

* Ariſtotle, I know, enumerates muſic and decoration among the ſix parts of tragedy. But it may, reaſonably enough, be queried, whether tragedy *may not exiſt*, as ſuch, *independently* of actual repreſentation. If it *may*, the two laſt-mentioned parts muſt be *uneſſential*.

improving upon the ſubtleties, and nice diſtinctions of Ariſtotle, and are often pedantic when he is not ſo,) is no more than an allegory contrived to illuſtrate ſome moral truth. "The poet," ſays Boſſu, "muſt begin with fixing on ſome maxim or inſtruction, which he intends to inculcate on mankind. He, next, forms a fable, like one of Æſop's, *wholly* with a view to the moral; and having thus ſettled and arranged his plan, he then looks into traditionary hiſtory for names, and incidents, to give his fable *ſome air of probability*." "Never," as Dr. Blair obſerves, (and I believe the reader will agree with him,)—"never, did a more frigid, pedantic notion enter into the mind of a critic."—But let us ſee.—The moral of Homer is

the

the fatal effects of diſſention in chiefs:—Milton's, of diſobedience to the Divine command:—of Virgil, it is not eaſy to ſay what, unleſs it be the neceſſity of perſeverance, and fortitude. But the chief deſign of Virgil was, *profeſſedly*, to "celebrate the original of the Roman empire:"—here, then, the moral is only *ſecondary*. That Homer's intention, in writing a poem, was, *principally*, to aggrandiſe his country, and compliment his countrymen on the exploits of their immediate anceſtors, there can be little doubt. Of Milton, we are told by the author of his life, the firſt deſign of writing an Epic poem was owing to a converſation about Taſſo, and his famous poem of the delivery of Jeruſalem. In ſome

Latin

Latin verſes to Manſo, we find he had pitched on King Arthur for his hero. In an eclogue, made ſoon after his return into England, "he propoſed the ſame deſign, and the ſame ſubject; and declared his ambition of writing ſomething, in his native language, which might render his name illuſtrious in theſe iſlands, though it might be obſcure and inglorious to the reſt of the world."—Here, then, we ſee emulation giving the firſt hint; ambition, and the love of fame ripening it into action:—and, from the change of ſubject, we may reaſonably conclude the moral of his intended poem was the leaſt part of his concern.—But there needs not a laboured deduction of circumſtances. It muſt be evident to every one that the moral,

moral, which the French writers repreſent as the poet's chief buſineſs, is, uſually, only an accidental and ſometimes unintentional reſult of his performance. His great deſire is to pleaſe and entertain: and his higheſt concern is to find a tale, tradition, or fragment of hiſtory that will admit of the requiſite embelliſhments of poetry, and come within the preſcribed limits of the art.

Of the unity of fable, likewiſe, much more has been ſaid by modern critics, than any precepts *rightly* deduced from their founder Ariſtotle will juſtify:—nor is he, it may be reaſonably conjectured, always infallible in his judgments. He ſays, "a

fable ſhould be an imitation of an action that is *one* and *entire*." The teſt he propoſes of this unity is, "that the parts of the fable ſhould be ſo connected, that if any one of them be either tranſpoſed, or taken away, the whole will be deſtroyed," or (a very ſingular *alternative!*) be "*changed*." Now the queſtion is,—whether *this* might not be ſaid of any fable extant, compoſed of parts however heterogeneous and diſcordant? We need only call theſe unſociable members epiſodes or digreſſions, and ſay, in ſigning their mittimus, "whatever may be either retained or omitted, without making any ſenſible difference, is not properly a part." Enough will ſtill, probably, ſtick together, to conſtitute what,

by

by theſe criteria, we may call a Fable. —Try even the Iliad, much more the Odyſſey, by theſe maxims, and their fable will melt away, like a maſs of ſnow in the ſunſhine.—But theſe analytical niceties, as applied to poetry; —this meaſuring the productions of genius by the yard, and half-yard, is, always, to be ſuſpected. A time will come, I am perſuaded, when the poor Muſe will find a more liberal gentleman-uſher than Ariſtotle. His plan will, however, it is hoped, ſerve as a model, and foundation for future codes of criticiſm. As matters now are, I much doubt whether a man ever was, or ever could be made, a better poet, or even a better critic by ſtudying Ariſtotle.

But let us deſcend to experiment: —the death of Hector is, ſurely, a no leſs *important* event than the Anger of Achilles. It is, moreover, an *entire* action in itſelf; and might, by the relation of prior incidents, and of thoſe that led immediately to it, compoſe a fable of ſufficient length, and importance for the Epic writer.—" This might do for tragedy, would an *Ariſtotelian* ſay, but is compoſed of *too few* parts for an Epic poem."—" Are there," would a modern *petit-maitre* in poetry exclaim, "any exact boundaries preſcribed to which the Epic *muſt* be extended? Is it, always, judged neceſſary, the world ſhould be lulled to ſlumber by twenty-odd books of tedious ſublimity.

" A cette

" A cette abondance cruelle
Je veux toujours, en veritè,
Et de La Fare, et de Chapelle,
Preferer la ſterilite."

Though I cannot agree with theſe over-refined and indolent gentlemen, in this preference of the *delicate ſhrub* of modern poetry to the *ſturdy*, branching *oak* of antique growth, yet it does not ſeem neceſſary that critical precepts drawn from the productions of antiquity, however excellent, ſhould be extended to all future exertions of the Muſe.

A Fable, as *entire*, is required alſo by Ariſtotle to have a diſtinctly apparent *beginning*, *middle*, and *end*. "A *beginning*, which does not, neceſſarily, ſuppoſe any thing before it; but which requires ſomething to follow

it. An *end*, which ſuppoſes ſomething to precede it, but which nothing is required to follow. A *middle*, which both ſuppoſes ſomething to precede, and requires ſomething to follow." Theſe may be eaſily *found*, no doubt, in all the Epic writers of antiquity. But may they not be, alſo, eaſily *imagined* in all poetic, or, even, proſe narrations that proceed in a regular ſeries of events?—In truth, this diſtinct apportionment of the parts of an Epic poem ſeems one of the over-niceties, or rather pedantrics of criticiſm, that have deſcended to us from its revered founder. Fond of minute diviſion, and exact method, he wiſhed to introduce a logical preciſion even into the efforts of imagination; and having diſcovered, or fancied this excellence

lence in Homer, at once, judged it eſſential to the Epic. But it is ſufficient to ſay, in refutation of it, that no ſuch diviſion exiſts, or can exiſt, in the order of nature. The properties he aſcribes to the events that conſtitute the *middle* of an Epic poem, are ſuch as belong to events in general: and of theſe muſt both the *beginning*, and *end* of a poem be compoſed.

Unity of *place* has been much inſiſted on, as eſſential to the Drama, by modern critics, though we can diſcover little or nothing ſaid on the ſubject in the Poetics, from whence they pretend to derive all their maxims. But they deduced this, in all probability, from thoſe ſpecimens of

the ancient Drama which ſtill exiſt; and in which, indeed, it is always preſerved. This *unity* has never, that I know of, been judged eſſential to the Epic. It ſeems, however, no inconſiderable advantage, with reſpect both to *clearneſs* of deſign, and to the *intereſt* of the reader. Were it not for the dread of imputed ſingularity, and paradox, I ſhould venture, even, to pronounce,—that whereas it is, in the Drama, an *imaginary* beauty, it is in the Epic, a *real* and important excellence. It may highly gratify the critic, in his cloſet, to ſee a dramatic author conform to his rigid maxims; but it is not very eaſy to imagine why an audience cannot as readily ſuppoſe a change of *place*, between the acts of a performance, as give into all the other

other deluſions requiſite to accompliſh the ends of a poet. But, in the Epic, this *unity* ſerves a very uſeful purpoſe. By incidental ſketches, it gradually brings us acquainted with the whole ſcenery around; and that in a manner highly gratifying and intereſting. In the former, the idea of *place* is impreſſed on our minds, and, as it were, identified to us, by ſcenery, and other decorations. As oft as theſe change, it is not difficult for a lively imagination to travel with them. In the latter ſpecies of poetry, the author has nothing to truſt to in this reſpect but mere verbal deſcription, which requires time, and repeated ſtrokes to be infixed, properly on the reader's mind. Let any one conſider the magnificent

nificent and extended landſcape Homer in his Iliad paints to the fancy. By the ſcene's being fixed to one ſpot, he has opportunity, by occaſional touches of deſcription, to bring the reader ſo familiar with it as, in a manner, to have a chart of it always before his eyes; to which he can mentally refer in the narration of any remarkable action or event. Then let him decide, whether, or not, he receives more ſatisfaction from this determinate and ſettled ſcenery, than from the continually ſhifting ſtations of the Eneid, or the Odyſſey.

It is, in all probability, greatly owing to this circumſtance that the epiſode of the deſtruction of Troy in Virgil,

Virgil, intereſts us rather more than even the *main event*, the founding a colony;—in the performance of which the Hero ſo often changes the ſcene. But Virgil is the great maſter of the Epiſode. They are, in him, introduced with an addreſs, and managed with an intereſt, which no other poet has yet rivalled. The Iliad of Homer has very little epiſode: what is given us, there, conſiſts, chiefly, in the over-flowing garrulity of ſome of the characters. Milton has ſhewn great judgment in copying Virgil, in this reſpect, in preference to his more congenial predeceſſor. His epiſodes are very happily imitated from the former, as to their *form*; though, frequently, the *manner* is a cloſe imitation of the latter. He has, like Virgil,

gil, extended his plan by including a narration of prior, and an anticipation of ſubſequent events.

On the former of theſe epiſodes, Addiſon* has a very ſingular remark. "Beſides," he obſerves, "the many other beauties in ſuch an epiſode, [that of the fall of the angels,] its *running parallel* with the great action of the poem hinders it from breaking the unity ſo much as another epiſode would have done, that had not ſo great an affinity with the principal ſubject. In ſhort, this is the ſame kind of beauty which the critics admire in the Spaniſh Friar, or the Double Diſcovery, where the two different

* Spectator, No. 267.

ferent plots look like counter parts and copies of each other."

By the word *parallel*, we are, I preſume, to underſtand *events*, that happened at the *ſame* period of time, in *different* places; and are, moreover, ſomewhat of the ſame *nature*, as are the two plots in Dryden. With reſpect to this latter property, the remark is juſt. The fall of the angels, and the fall of man originated in the ſame crime; and have ſome reſemblance, in other reſpects. With regard to *time*, (the chief thing implied by the word *parallel*, and which, alone, can make the compariſon with the Spaniſh Friar good,) the remark, entirely, fails. The two plots in Milton are not *parallel* lines; but the

one

one a *prolongation* of the other, in its *beginning*, as the epiſode of Michael's viſion on the mount, is a *continuation* of it, from the *end*. The fall of the angels happened prior to the opening of the poem:—and, thus, can, with no more propriety, be ſaid to be parallel to its ſubject, or compared to the plots of Dryden's play, (where they are *really* parallel,) than the epiſode of the deſtruction of Troy in Virgil, or the ſhort occaſional glances into prior events, in which we are gratified by the author of the Iliad.

JUVENILE EXCURSIONS

IN

LITERATURE AND CRITICISM.

PART III.

SHORT DESCRIPTIONS OF SOME PICTURESQUE SCENES ON THE NORTHERN LAKES.

June 8, 1780. THE firſt ſpecimens of the Engliſh Apennine appear on gaining the top of a hill, juſt on this ſide Lancaſter. For that reaſon this view, and another near Ambleſide, mentioned in its place, are, I think, among the moſt

moſt ſtriking of all. The hill you are on forms your fore-ground. The town of Lancaſter, with its caſtle, and uneven ſtreets, appears on another, not far off. Juſt beyond, (a very unuſual ſight to a native of the Southern part of the iſland,) you have the great bay of Morecambe, as it was antiently called, now Cartmel ſands; dry at low water, but, even then, a ſtriking object. On the other ſide of that, but at a conſiderable diſtance, are the Weſtmoreland and Cumberland mountains, toſſed about in a very ſavage, but moſt magnificent ſtile.

— 9. The road between Kendal, and Ambleſide is, for the moſt part, very unpleaſant:—an excellent preparation for the grand ſcenes you are entering

entering upon! You, now again, entirely loſe ſight of the mountains, till they break out a little before you come to Winander-mere. Travellers certainly loſe much who go by Penrith. From about three miles on this ſide Ambleſide, quite to Keſwick, you have the moſt ſublime, as well as beautiful ſcenery that can well be imagined; than *doubly* enchanting from its *novelty*. The objects that muſt ſtrike every eye moſt, are the very ſtrange, double-headed rock at the end of the lake, called Wrynoſe and Hardknot; and (than which there cannot be a more lovely object in nature,) the romantic village of Clapper's-gate at the bottom of its wooded mountain. —But more of theſe hereafter.—

— 10. Proceeded to Keſwick thro' a chaos of mountains, and clouds. The day ſo gloomy that it was difficult to diſtinguiſh one from the other, except by the torrents that every where fell, with aſtoniſhing noiſe, into the valley. This kind of weather is, however, ſo congenial to the ſcenery here, that I would adviſe the enthuſiaſtic admirer of nature never to defer his journey among theſe mountains, on account of a wet day.

— 12. Walked along the lane that leads to Borrodale, 'till I came to a ſpot where the lake forms a ſmall bay, with ſhelving banks covered with verdure quite down to the water's edge. At a ſmall diſtance, ſhrubs and young oaks

oaks encloſed this retired ſpot on all ſides, ſo as but juſt to leave a glimpſe of the top of Walla-crag, though it impends almoſt over your head. All united far ſurpaſſed whatever I had yet ſeen; and ſeemed one of thoſe peculiar combinations of ſcenery which, alone, can merit deſcription.—Before you the lake (then nearly calm,) ſtretches its clear, ſilvered ſurface, here about three miles in breadth. It is ſurrounded on all ſides, except juſt oppoſite, where the valley of Newland opens a long, cultivated viſto, with mountains of almoſt every poſſible ſize, ſhape, and character:—the craggy and precipitous, the conic, the paſtoral, the ſylvan, and the wildly-romantic. On the right, at about five miles diſtance appears the giant

Skiddow with his anfractuoſities, and ſubordinate hillocks, and the little, blue-rooſed town of Keſwick, apparently, at his feet. On the left, a green promontory ſtretches a good way into the water; and thus ſhuts in exactly a ſufficient landſcape for the eye to contemplate without confuſion. You can, however, juſt diſcover the rude tops of the Borrodale mountains over the trees.—This ſpot is not far from that which Mr. Gray celebrates under the name of Carf-cloſe-reeds, but affords a better proſpect.—N. B. It is only by taking Derwentwater and its environs in detail, and by detatched parts, that they will recompence the trouble of coming at them. When ſeen in a general view, eſpecially from any height, this lake

and

and its mountains, after Ambleſide, muſt diſappoint. It appears exceedingly curious and uncommon; but ſeems to have little of the great, or the pleaſing 'till you have ſurveyed its banks; or, what I think moſt gratifying, ſailed round its edge, and explored every green bay.

— 15. Walked along the ſame road under crags which ſeem ready to cruſh you at every ſtep. The feet of theſe are, notwithſtanding, beautifully wooded. The famed cataract at Lodore, or Loch-dore, was almoſt dry. It was not 'till near three months after that I could ſee it, in any tolerable perfection. I conclude, therefore, that haſty travellers never ſee it ſo at all. After paſſing a village at the head of

the lake called the Grange, and the great ſtone which, among ſo many wonders of a ſuperior kind, I did not ſtop to contemplate, I was at laſt arreſted by a proſpect ſo characteriſtically wild, and, at the ſame time, ſo uncommonly beautiful, as to make it ſeem quite unneceſſary to proceed farther in queſt of landſcape. In fact, I afterwards found, on riding into Borrodale valley, that there *really* is nothing worth ſeeing farther. The charm vaniſhes at a nearer approach. This view is about a hundred yards beyond the great ſtone, juſt as the defile begins to open a little, and the road to wind down the rock. It is a landſcape for Salvator, but with more beauty than he, uſually, admits. The rocks diverging, diſcover the moſt cultivated

cultivated part of the retired vale of Borrodale, with the Derwent winding through it. The proſpect is bounded on the left, (the ſide on which the road is cut,) by rocks totally perpendicular and bare of wood; but with ſummits ſpiring up into a thouſand romantic ſhapes. On the right, beyond the river, (for which, and the road there is, here, hardly room,) are rocks ſtill higher, yet not abſolutely perpendicular; entirely covered with wood, excepting a few ſpots, where the naked rock ſtares through the trees, and gives variety to the tints. The centre of the piece is marked out, at about two miles diſtance, by the moſt beautiful hill imaginable, of an oblong form. This is entirely co-

vered with wood, and curiouſly indented by deep gullets, and marked with every poſſible variety of colouring. Around it are ſeveral little hamlets, and ſpots of cultivation. The back ground of the picture is compoſed of ſtupendous mountains of a greyiſh hue, here and there patched with wood, but, in general, bare, with every-where deſcending torrents plainly diſcernable, like ſilver threads, at the diſtance of, at leaſt, ſix miles. The landſcape might be transferred to canvaſs, without the *ſlighteſt* addition from the artiſt. Even the fore-ground is finiſhed by nature with fragments of rock, the winding road, &c.—On firing a piſtol in this ſpot, the ſound was reverberated, for many

many ſeconds, from the gradually-receding rocks. The barking of a dog which accidently paſſed, had the effect of a pack of hounds.

— 23. Returned to Ambleſide, and viſited the famous caſcade. It is on a high hill, about half a mile from the town, and difficult to find without a guide. The fall is about ſixty feet. But it is the place, and other accidental circumſtances, that make it ſo beautiful an object. The ſtream which ſupplies it runs through a thick wood. Such is the gloom of the place, and depth of the gullet, that the lower part of the fall is diſcernable only by its white foam. It begins to deſcend in two diſtinct ſtreams; about mid-way down united into

into one. The hue of the dark brown rock, ſo beautifully contraſted by the tranſparency of the ſtream, forms, altogether, a ſcene which muſt, always, far exceed expectation. The Lodore cataract is, comparatively, a vulgar object.

Rode afterwards to Bownas, along the bank of Winander. The views of this ride are ſaid by travellers, to be ſcarcely equalled by any thing in Europe, and I ſaw no reaſon to contradict their report. Contrary to the general opinion, I cannot help greatly prefering Winander to the Keſwick lake. Its views are on a larger ſcale; more varied by delightful bays,—by wooded promontories,—and by every other ſpecies of accidental beauty.

The

The ſhore of this magnificent lake every where, (but more particularly on the ſouthern ſide,) waves in the boldeſt curves, and is chequered by wood and lawn, corn fields and meadows, quite down to the water's edge. At the Ambleſide extremity it exceeds Keſwick, even its chief excellence, ſublimity and majeſty. The mountains about Ridal are much higher, and of nobler form than any round Derwentwater. In ſhort, it wants nothing the other poſſeſſes except craggy horror, which may well be ſpared in a ſcene of this kind; and exhibits what the other does not,—*ſupreme beauty*. The mountains which ſeparate Keſwick from the reſt of the world are, indeed, ſufficiently majeſtic: but they are ſet ſo cloſe together as to preclude variety,

ty, and excite an idea of ſolitary excluſion, and confinement. The extent, moreover, of Winander, (for it is, at leaſt, twelve miles in length,)—the expanſe of ſurface it ſpreads before the eye, when viewed from either of its extremities, or angle of its windings, gives birth to emotions which the other, with its round, baſon-like form, cannot excite*. There are at Keſwick many more uncommon and ſtrangely-ſavage ſpots:—but no ſuch extended, diverſified and ſweetly paſtoral ſcenes as on Winander.

— 28. Walked out, in the evening, by the ſide of Winander. The weather perfectly

* The inhabitants call Derwent-water the Devil's Chamber-Pot.

perfectly ſerene, and the lake unruffled by the ſlighteſt breeze. The ſky was warm and glowing; with juſt the requiſite degree of *haze*, (by no means a proper term, but I recollect no other,) to give objects their due ſoftneſs. About ſunſet, the ſcenery became ſo enchantingly beautiful as to defy all the feeble attempts of deſcription. Above all, the mountains beyond Ridal houſe, exhibited a ſpectacle altogether new and ſurpriſing. The purple evening clouds hung about their ſummits on every ſide, and in, almoſt, every direction. Some of theſe put on the appearance of thin purple ſtreaks of light, and deſcended even into the valleys that now began to be involved in ſhade. Others hung obliquely acroſs their wooded ſides. The

tops

tops only of the hills retained, any of the, almoſt, fiery glow of ſunſet; (except in a few places, where his beams darted between them, and purpled ſome portion of their broad ſides;) but the reflection of light from the water caſt a ſoft and ſecondary kind of luſtre on thoſe objects the ſun could not reach, which exceeded all that moſt painters could conceive, or, much leſs, imitate. All this repeated, invertedly, on the calm ſurface of the lake, filled the ſpectator with an aſtoniſhment and delight, that it would hardly ſeem in mere inanimate nature to beſtow. One circumſtance was particularly ſtriking, and not very eaſy to be accounted for, —a long line of golden hue, on the water's edge, while all around, for

ſome

ſome miles, was of the darkeſt green from the reflection of the wooded mountains, behind which the ſun was ſinking.

— 30. Rowed out on Winander, about three miles, to angle in a very romantic, rocky bay on the oppoſite ſide of the lake. After about two hours fiſhing, on doubling the point formed by the rocks, a little before ſun-ſet, ſuch a proſpect broke in upon us as, I think, the celebrated bay of Naples itſelf can hardly excel. To all that preſented itſelf on the evening of the 28th, were added extent, ſuperior variety, and grandeur.—Before us lay a calm expanſe of water, about three miles in length, and two in breadth, every where purpled by the

ſetting

ſetting ſun;—except where ſhaded by the reflection of the wooded hills, the darker verdure of the nearer promontories, or the blue tints of the diſtant mountains. In the centre of the landſcape, at about the diſtance of five miles, lay the white manſion of Sir Michael Fleming, at the foot of the vaſt and majeſtic mountains which formed the back-ground. To the right, about two miles off, a very ſteep hill of a conic form, covered down to the water with groves of oak, with, here and there, a lawn intermixed, and enlivened by ſeveral white farm-houſes, ſhot its ſpreading roots into the lake. To the left, the Borrodale mountains were piled on each other, in every poſſible romantic, and craggy ſhape; ſome of them at ten or twelve

twelve miles diſtance, ſo as to be ſcarce diſcernible from the ſky. Between theſe and the Ridal mountains, the moſt beautiful feature of all, the village of Clapper's-gate appeared at the foot of its richly-fringed rock. Under this two low round rocks, not far from each other, roſe from the water; both crowned, alſo, with wood. To finiſh the whole picture, a long, narrow promontory covered with young oaks ſtretched, on the left, near half a mile into the lake, and, by its dark verdure, moſt exquiſitely ſet off the dim, half-viewleſs mountains in the off-ſkip.—After enjoying this ſuperlative ſcenery for near an hour, we, at laſt, reluctantly rowed to ſhore. —It ſhould be obſerved that theſe views are but ſeldom to be contem-

plated in ſuch high perfection; and never, poſſibly, by nine in ten of the haſty travellers who viſit theſe ſpots. Opportunities muſt be watched, and a happy concurrence of ſerenity of weather, warmth of ſky, and ſoftneſs of atmoſphere, can alone compenſate the trouble of an amateur. — The lake was, this evening, ſo completely beautiful, through the junction of all the above requiſites, that even the heart of our rugged old boatman was warmed with a ſecret pleaſure by it. He could not help obſerving—how much *our water*, as he called it, was ſuperior to Keſwick, which he, contemptuouſly, ſtiled a mere *fiſh pond*, in compariſon to it.—The rock mentioned above as our ſtation, is nearly oppoſite to the Packhorſe inn, and about

about three miles from the Ambleſide extremity of the lake.

July 28. Rode from Cartmel, in Lancaſhire, to Penrith. Except a few miles at the beginning, the whole journey ſcarcely to be paralleled. The road lies along the whole length of Winander-mere, and exhibits every poſſible ſtile of landſcape, and very often combines them all together in one view. The latter part of this journey,—that between Ambleſide and Penrith,—is, if poſſible, more wildly-mountainous than the road from Ambleſide to Keſwick. It grew dark before we could reach the magnificent lake of Ulles-water:—however the deep gloom of the water dim-

ly reflecting the vaſt mountains on its oppoſite banks, afforded, for almoſt four miles, a ſcene of the deepeſt repoſe, and moſt majeſtic ſolemnity. The ſingularity of it was greatly heigthened by an Aurora Borealis; not of the moſt vivid kind, but of a duſky red, like that communicated to the atmoſphere by a diſtant fire. This tinged, and only tinged the calm boſom of the lake, but gave all other ſurrounding objects a very melancholy kind of luſtre. The road runs for four or five miles, through thick woods, on the margin of the water; ſometimes winding up the ſides of rocks which hang over it, and ſometimes nearly on a level with its ſurface.

— 29. On viſiting Ulles-water the day following, found my expectations, with reſpect to the beauty of this lake, had been raiſed much too high by the pompous deſcriptions of Mr. Hutchinſon, and the guides. The firſt three or four miles along its banks are very mean, and fall far ſhort of either of the other lakes. The mountains on the ſouth ſide are lofty, but bare, and unſightly. But the further end makes ample amends. The hills grow woody: — finely variegated, ſometimes by naked rock, at others by the ſofteſt verdure, and towards Patterdale arrange themſelves in ſome of the nobleſt combinations it is poſſible to imagine. The rocky road begins to wind at ſome height, perpendicularly, over the water, through

woods of noble old oaks that are, abſolutely, fairy ground:—an *enchanted foreſt!*—But above all, what I would recommend to a traveller's notice, is the ſcenery juſt beyond; eſpecially, as an afternoon view. A valley opens towards Helvellyn, who, at the diſtance of five or ſix miles, lifts a ſquare head above the clouds, which is in a ſuperior ſtile to any thing elſe he will ſee in this country. It is an undeſcribable mixture of majeſty, and beauty. This part of Ulleſwater excels the other lakes, more, than its former part falls ſhort of them, in every requiſite.

Auguſt 8. Rode, through Newland valley, to a village among the mountains, called Buttermire. After aſcending

cending a ſteep hill, at the farther end of Newland, you come ſuddenly upon a view that makes all the *merely mountainous* ſcenes the traveller has before beheld appear tame and inſignificant. The road (about two feet broad, but often *interrupted* by torrents,) begins to wind down to Buttermire; with a precipice of, at leaſt, 500 feet on your right hand;—with a noiſy torrent at the bottom, and ſuch a gigantic brotherhood of mountains on the other ſide of it, as thoſe who have only ſeen Keſwick, Borrodale, &c. can have little conception of. Notwithſtanding their height, and ſteepneſs, they are, all of them, except a prodigious, dun-coloured, furrowed mountain to the north-eaſt, totally free from crags; and their ſmooth,

green ſides ſpotted all over with ſheep. The profound ſilence of theſe ſequeſtered ſpots always ſtrikes a ſolitary traveller. Here, nothing ſeems ever to interrupt it but the torrent below. After winding about two miles on the mountain's ſide, you come down upon Buttermire. This village lies in a, conſiderably, larger valley which opens nearly at right angles with that by which you came. It is animated by two fine lakes, and a wonderful amphitheatre of mountains. But of theſe you have in your way thither ſpecimens, which you need not expect to ſee outdone. There is one, however, of a very remarkable form. It ſeems nearly as high as Skiddow, but much ſteeper. The whole of the upper lake is blackened by its ſhadow; and,

and, from a ſort of crater near its top, it pours down a torrent, from near a thouſand feet, into the lake. —Proceeded from thence to Ennerdale, which (after attempting a ſhorter way thro' impaſſable moſſes, and over perpendicular mountains, which have, in general, a zigzag ſteep path acroſs them) I, at laſt, found. Smith's fine print of the water there had made me very deſirous of ſeeing it. But all was diſappointment. His print is, in fact, an entire fancy piece; of which the firſt hints *might* have been ſuggeſted by a view of Ennerdale-Broadwater, as it is called. He thought himſelf ſafe from all detection, and few, I believe, but myſelf, would have been at the trouble to detect him.—The breed of dogs here uncom-

uncommonly fierce. They continually faſten upon the traveller's horſe, and often put him in danger of a fall.

— 12. Spent the whole day (one of the pleaſanteſt of my life) on Derwent water. Dined in a circular, and very pretty wooded bay, on the weſtern ſide of the lake. It is called, I believe, Water-end; and is worth the trouble of enquiry, as, almoſt, the only beautiful ſpot, *purely* ſo, of this, otherwiſe, wonderful lake. While we were at dinner, the clouds of a very gloomy forenoon gradually broke away, and gave place to the moſt delicious evening the whole ſeaſon had afforded. The water, every where clear as chryſtal, and of a ſilvery brightneſs, became, on a ſudden, totally

tally calm. We were under ſome ſteep, and fantaſtically-pointed hills, which riſe, almoſt perpendicularly, from the water, but had, notwithſtanding, their ſkirts covered with fields of corn, now ripe for harveſt, with little patches of woodland, here and there, and their green tops thick-ſtudded with ſheep. Their effect, as reflected in the water, was ſuch as I ſhall, I hope, be excuſed from attempting to deſcribe. A little farther, but almoſt in a line with the bottom of theſe hills, (for we were, nearly, in the *direction* of the range of hills on the weſt of the lake,) a bold and abrupt promontory ſhot into the water with an old oak or two upon its extremity. Over theſe, appeared the "jaws of Borrodale," with its

its *caſtled* rock; and the Lodore range of crags, 'till intercepted by the other horn of the bay we were in. The combination ſeems ſimple:—but the *effect* of the above-mentioned trees, and their *contraſt* with the Borrodale crags was pictureſque, beyond credibility. Nor, on turning round, was the little bay itſelf inferior in lovelineſs to any part of the landſcape.—While we were contemplating the wonders of the ſpot, a ſhepherd, whoſe white cottage lay in a ſhady corner of the bay, began to play one of the wild, and Scotch-like Cumberland tunes on his pipe. This was all that was wanting to ſuch a ſcene, and, inſtantly, converted the whole into romance. So much does the power of muſic depend

pend upon time and place, that I queſtion whether one of Haydn's ſymphonies would, then, have had a ſuperior effect! In a room it, certainly, would not.—I have ſometimes doubted whether this day's excurſion, or that of the 30th of June on Winander, afforded the fineſt ſcenery, or made the deepeſt impreſſion on the fancy. They were, certainly, of very different ſtyles, and, of courſe, raiſed very diſſimilar emotions. That on Winander comprehended almoſt every ſpecies of beauty. The Derwent views were, comparatively, confined and of ſmall extent; but ſingularly romantic, and *ſtrangely* beautiful. There was ſomething in them totally unlike to any thing I ever have met with;

with;—ſomething which ſeems to approach nearer to the accounts travelers give us of ſome enchanting iſlands in the *South Seas*, than to any *Engliſh* landſcape. On the whole, though I cannot, as *ſuch*, give them the preference to the noble views on Winander, yet, I believe, from their ſingularity, they made a much ſtronger impreſſion on the mind, and will be remembered, with delight, after all traces of the others are worn out.—Even at this diſtance of time, after many years of toil and confinement, they ſooth with a ſecret pleaſure; and recal to memory thoſe days of early youth and innocence which the encreaſing cares of life render, every day, more dear to the imagination.

[This little journal is not ſubmitted to the public eye, without a complete conſciouſneſs of its inferiority to ſeveral things of the ſort, lately, printed. But as it deſcribes ſome characteriſtic ſcenery they have not touched on, and points out ſome ſtations they do not notice, it may, the author hopes, plead ſome merit, though, certainly, of an inferior kind.]

FINIS.